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# THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY



EDITOR  
SURENDRANATH TAGORE

VAISAKH, 1331 B. S.  
APRIL, 1924 A. D.



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# THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

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Vol. II.

APRIL, 1924

No. 1.

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## WHAT THEN?

BY RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

The flesh is impure, the world is vanity, therefore renunciation in the shape of self-mortification is necessary for salvation,—this was the ideal of spiritual life held forth in medieval Europe. Modern Europe, however, considers it unwholesome to acknowledge an everlasting feud between the human world of natural desires and social aims on the one hand, and the spiritual life with its discipline and aspiration on the other. According to her, we enfeeble the moral purpose of our existence if we put too much emphasis on the illusoriness of this world. To drop down dead in the race course of life, while running at full speed, is acclaimed by her to be the most glorious death.

It may be that Europe has gained a certain strength by pinning its faith on the world, by refusing to dwell on its evanescence, on the certainty of death,—condemning the opposite frame of mind as morbid. Her children are, perhaps, thereby trained to be more efficient in competition, to gain the victory in the struggle which, in their view, represents the whole of life. But, whatever may be the practical effect of leading *this life* as if its connection with the world were interminable,—that is not a fact.

Doubtless Nature, for its own biological purposes, has created in us a strong faith in life, by keeping us unmindful of death. Nevertheless, not only our physical existence, but also the environment which it builds up around itself, desert us in the moment of triumph. The greatest prosperity comes to its

end, dissolving into emptiness; the mightiest empire is overtaken by stupor amidst the flicker of its festival lights. All this is none the less true because its truism bores us to be reminded of it.

And yet, it is equally true that, though all our mortal relationships have their end, we cannot ignore them with impunity while they last. If we behave as if they do not exist, merely because they will not persist, they will all the same exact their dues, with a great deal over by way of penalty. We cannot claim exemption from payment of fare because the railway train has not the permanence of the dwelling house. Trying to ignore bonds that are real, albeit temporary, only strengthens and prolongs their bondage.

That is why the spirit of attachment and that of detachment have to be reconciled in harmony, and then only will they lead us to reality. Attachment is the force which draws us to the truth in its finite aspect, its aspect of manifestation; while detachment leads us to freedom in the infinity of truth which is its ideal aspect. According to the symbolism of Indian thought, Shiva, the male principle of truth, represents the spirit of freedom, while Shívání, its female principle, represents the spirit of manifestation. In their union dwells the ideal of perfection.]

In order to achieve the reconciliation of these opposites, we must first come to a true understanding of man; that is to say, we must not cut him down to the requirements of any particular purpose. To look on trees only as firewood, is not to know the tree in its completeness. Similarly, to look on man merely as the protector of his country, or the producer of its wealth, is to reduce him to soldier or merchant, to make his efficiency as such to be the measure of his manhood. Not only is such view limited, it is destructive. And those whom we would thus glorify are but assisted to a rocket-like descent.

How India once looked on man as greater than any purpose he could serve, is shown by this well-known couplet of Chánakya:

**Tyajedekam kulasyárthe, grámasyárthe kulam tyajet;  
Grámam janapadasyárthe, átmárthe prithivím tyajet.**

*For the family sacrifice the individual, for the community the family, for the country the community, for the soul all the world.*

In other words, we must first realise man's soul as separate from and greater than all worldly considerations, and then we shall be in a position to recognise his true relations to country, community and family, his true place in the different affairs of the world.

That was what had been achieved in India. Our sages had realised the soul of man as something very great indeed. They saw no end to his dignity, which found its consummation in Brahma Himself. Any limited view of man would therefore be a false view. He could not be merely Citizen or Patriot, for neither City nor Country, nor for the matter of that the bubble called the World, could contain his eternal soul.

Bhartrihari, who was once a king, has said :

**Práptáh sakalakámadughástam kim,  
Nyastam padam shirasi vidvishatam tatah kim;  
Sampáditám pranayino vibhavaistatah kim,  
Kalpasthitástanubhritám tanavastatah kim?**

*What if you have secured the fountain-head of all desires,—Lakshmi herself; what if you have put your foot on the neck of your enemy, or by your good fortune gathered friends around you; what, even, if you have succeeded in keeping mortal bodies alive for ages,—what then?*

That is to say, man is greater than all these objects of his desire. You can only intelligently direct man's life towards its perfection if you remember that greatest truth of him which courses from infinite to infinite, without beginning and without end.

It was in this amplitude of their vision of man that our ancient sages differed from the European monks of the middle ages, whereby they arrived at a correspondingly different standard of the value of man's life. The sages of India did not consider strenuousness of effort, up to the very end, to be a matter for glorification. Work was not the be all and end all with them, their aim was, rather, to come to the end of all work. They had no doubt that the liberation of man's soul was the one object of man's quest.



Europe is incessantly singing paeans to Freedom, which to her means freedom to acquire, freedom to enjoy, freedom to work. This freedom is by no means a small thing, and much toil and care are required to maintain it in this world. Yet our sages of old did not find their satisfaction in it, still questioning: *What then?* This freedom was no freedom to them. India wanted freedom even from desire and from work.

In the process of attaining freedom one must bind his will in order to save its forces from distraction and wastage, so as to gain for it the velocity which comes from the bondage itself. Those who seek liberty in a purely political plane must constantly curtail it and reduce their freedom of thought and action to that narrow limit which is necessary for making political liberty secure, very often at the cost of liberty of conscience.

Are the soldiers of England freemen, or are they not merely living guns? And what of the toilers in her mines and factories,—mere appendages of the machines they work,—who assist with their life's blood to paint red the map of England's Empire? How few are the Englishmen who really participate in this political freedom of theirs? Europe may have preached and striven for individualism, but where else in the world is the individual so much of a slave?

The only reply to this is the paradox to which I have already referred. Freedom can only be attained through bonds; it is a profit which can only be gained if you lay out a commensurate capital of bondage.

Individualism was also the object of India's quest,—not of this restricted kind, however, for it stretched up towards perfect emancipation,—so it tried to gain this larger individual freedom through every detail of life, every relation of family and society. And as in Europe her ideal of freedom has manifested itself in the full rigour of mechanical and military bonds, so the ideal of India found its expression in the hard and fast regulation of the most intimate details of the daily life. If we fail to see the ideal behind, and focus our view on its external manifestations alone, then indeed in India individual liberty appears most thoroughly fettered.

The fact of the matter is, that when in any country degeneration sets in, the important thing is lost sight of and its place occupied by the rubbishy details which have accumulated round it. The bird flies away and the empty cage is left. That is what has happened in our country. We still submit to the bondage of all kinds of social restrictions, but the freedom, the salvation which was the object, is no longer in our view, or in our thoughts, or in our efforts. We have forgotten the ideal, we have lost all sense of the grandeur of our striving,—what remains is the impotence of blind habit. So that if now the looker-on should come to the conclusion that the social system of India is only a device for keeping down its people by meaningless injunctions and prohibitions, we may get angry, but will find it difficult to give an effective contradiction.

It is not my object to lament our downfall. What I wish to point out is, that India had originally accepted the bonds of her social system in order to transcend society, as the rider puts reins on his horse and stirrups on his own feet in order to ensure greater speed towards his goal. India knew that society was not the ultimate end, the final refuge of man, but only the means of leading him to his liberation. And if her bonds were even more severe than those which Europe has imposed on herself, that was because an even greater Freedom was in contemplation. Her present plight only shows that the deeper the lake, the more cavernous is its hollow when it has dried up.

The reconciliation of these opposite aspects of bondage and freedom, of the means and the end, is thus referred to in the Ishopanishad :

**Andham tamah pravishanti ye avidyámupásate.**

**Tato bhuya iva te tamo ya u vidyayám ratáh,**

**Vidyáñchávi dyáñcha yastadvedabhayam saha,**

**Avidyayá mrityum tirtvá vidyayámamritamasnute.**

*In darkness are they who worship only the world, but in greater darkness they who worship the Infinite alone. He, who accepts both, saves himself from death by the knowledge of the former, and by that of the latter attains immortality.*

That is to say, we must first have our fulness of world-life before we can attain the Infinite. Desire must be yoked to work for the purpose of transcending both desire and work, and then only can union with Brahma be thought of. The mere renunciation of the world does not entitle to immortality.

**Kurvanneveha karmāni jijīviṣhet śhatam samah,  
Evam tvayi mānyatheto'sti na karma lipyate nare.**

*In work must thou desire to live a hundred years. O man! no other way is open to thee except through work.*

A full life with full work can alone fulfil the destiny of man. When his wordly life is thus perfected, it comes to its natural end, and the fetters of work are loosened and drop off. As a help to view life and life's ending in this simple, natural way, the Ishopanishad asks us to remember that

**Iśhāvāsyamidam sarvam yat kincha jagatyām jagat,  
Tena tyaktena bhunjīthā mā gridhah kasyasviddhanam.**

*All that is in this world is enveloped by God. Enjoy that which He gives you. Covet not the wealth of others.*

The poison of the worldly life is neutralised as soon as we realise that it is enveloped by God. Its pettiness is relieved. Its bonds do not get a grip on us. And no room for snatching or grabbing is left, once we know all enjoyment as the gift of God. This elevation of work and enjoyment by linking them with Brahma, is the origin of the Indian social system. It is thus that India tried to liberate the human soul.

In Europe we see only two divisions of man's worldly life,—the period of training, and that of work. In work it ends. But work is a process and cannot really be the end of anything; it must have some gain, some achievement, as its object. And yet Europe has omitted to put before man any definite goal in which his work may find its natural termination and gain its rest. To acquisition, whether of material or of knowledge, there is no limit. And the European idea of civilisation puts all its emphasis on the progress of this cumulative acquisition, forgetting that the best contribution which each individual can make to the progressive life of humanity is in the perfection of

his own life. So their end comes in the middle of things; there is no game, but only the chase.

We, also, say that the desire is not exhausted, but rather increases, with the getting. How then is one to come to the end of work? The reply that India of old gave was, that there is an exception to this general rule, that there is a plane wherein getting does arrive at its terminus, whereto if we strive to attain, our work shall come to an end, and rest be ours. The Universe cannot be so madly conceived that desire should be an interminable song with no finale. And just as it is painful to stop in the middle of the tune, it should be as pleasant to reach its final cadence.

India has not advised us to come to a sudden stop while work is in full swing. It is true that the unending procession of the world has gone on, through its ups and downs, from the beginning of creation till to-day; but it is equally obvious that each individual's connection therewith *does* get finished. Must he necessarily quit it without any sense of fulfilment? Had that been so, he would have been unfortunate indeed!

So, in the divisions of man's world life which we had in India, work came in the middle, and freedom at the end. As the day is divided into morning, noon, afternoon and evening so India had divided man's life into four parts, following the requirements of his nature. The day has the waxing and waning of its light, so has man of his bodily powers; and, acknowledging this, India gave a connected meaning to his life from start to finish.

First came *brahmacharyá*, the period of education; then *gárhasthya*, that of the world's work; then *vánaprasthya*, the retreat for the loosening of bonds; and finally *pravrajyá*, the expectant awaiting of freedom through death.

Nowadays we have come to look upon life as a conflict with death,—the intruding enemy, not the natural ending,—in impotent quarrel with which we spend every stage of it. When the time comes for youth to depart, we would hold it back by main force. When the fervour of desire slackens, we would revive it with fresh fuel of our own devising. When our sense

organs weaken, we urge them to keep up their efforts. Even when our grip has relaxed we are reluctant to give up possession.

We fain would ignore all the rest of our life except only its morning and noon. And when at last sheer *vis major* compels us to acknowledge its afternoon and evening, we are either in a rebellious, or in a despairing frame of mind, and so unable to make due use of them. We are not trained to recognise the inevitable as natural, and so cannot give up gracefully that which has to go, but needs must wait till it is snatched from us. The truth comes as conqueror only because we have lost the art of receiving it as guest.

The stem of the ripening fruit becomes loose, its pulp soft, but its seed hardens with provision for the next life. Our outward losses, due to age, have likewise corresponding inward gains. But, in man's inner life, his will plays a dominant part, so that these gains depend on his own disciplined striving; that is why, in the case of undisciplined man, who has omitted to secure such provision for the next stage, it is so often seen that his hair is gray, his mouth toothless, his muscles slack, and yet his stem-hold on life has refused to let go its grip, so much so that he is anxious to exercise his will in regard to worldly details even after death. This kind of forcefulness is coming to be regarded, even in our country, as something to be proud of; but what is there so glorious in it?

Renounce we must, and through renunciation gain,—that is the truth of the inner world.

The flower must shed its petals for the sake of fruition, the fruit must drop off for the re-birth of the tree. The child leaves the refuge of the womb in order to achieve the further growth of body and mind in which consists the whole of the child life; next, the soul has to come out of this self-contained stage into the fuller life, which has varied relations with kinsman and neighbour, together with whom it forms a larger body; lastly comes the decline of the body, the weakening of desire, and, enriched with its experiences, the soul now leaves the narrower life for the universal life, to which it dedicates its accumulated wisdom on the one hand and, on the other, itself

enters into relations with the Life Eternal; so that, when finally the decaying body has come to the very end of its tether, the soul views its breaking away quite simply and without regret, in the expectation of its own re-birth into the Infinite.

From individual body to community, from community to universe, from universe to Infinity,—this is the soul's normal progress.

Our sages, therefore, keeping in mind the goal of this progress, did not, in life's first stage of education, prescribe merely the learning of books or things, but *brahmacharyá*, the living in discipline, whereby both enjoyment and its renunciation would come equally easy to the strengthened character. Life being a pilgrimage, with liberation in Brahma as its object, the living of it was as a spiritual exercise to be carried through its different stages, humbly, reverently and vigilantly. And the pupil, from his very initiation, had this final consummation kept in his view.

The series of adjustments between within and without, which constitute the physical life, have become automatic; but in the case of man, his mind comes in as a disturbing factor which is still in the stage of conscious experimentation and which therefore may involve him in endless trouble before its activities can be attuned to universal law. For instance, the body may have come to the end of its requirement of food for the time, whereas the mind will not have it so, but, seeking to prolong the enjoyment of its satisfaction, even beyond actual need, spurs on the tongue and the stomach to greater efforts, thus upsetting age-long adjustments and creating widely ramified sorrow in the process of the superfluous effort required for procuring needless material.

Once the mind refuses to be bound by actual requirements, there ceases to be any reason why it should cry halt at any particular limit, and so, like trying to extinguish fire with oil, its acquisitions only make its desires blaze up all the fiercer. That is why it is so essential to habituate the mind, from the very beginning, to be conscious of, and desirous of keeping within, the natural limits; in other words, to attune itself to the universal

nature, so that, with every liberty to play its own varied tunes, it may learn to avoid discord with the Good and True.]

After the period of such education comes the period of world-life. Manu tells us that

**Natathaitáni shakyante sanniyantumasevayá,  
Vishayeshu prajushtáni yathá jñānena nityashah.**

*It is not possible to discipline ourselves so effectively if out of touch with the world, as while pursuing the world life with wisdom.*

That is to say, wisdom does not attain completeness except through the living of life; and discipline divorced from wisdom is not true discipline, but merely the meaningless following of custom, which is only a veil for ignorance.

Work, especially good work, becomes easy, only when desire has learnt to discipline itself. Then alone does the householders' state become a centre of welfare for all the world, and instead of being an obstacle, helps on the final liberation. Then can the householder dedicate all his activities to Brahma and rejoice in so doing. When all his work is good work, its bondage cannot prove galling and will easily be loosened in due time and fall away from the worker.

The second stage of life having been thus spent, the decline of the bodily powers must be taken as a warning that it is coming to its natural end. This must not be taken dismally as a notice of dismissal to one still eager to stick to his post, but joyfully as the news of promotion to higher duties.

The field for the exercise of bodily strength, of alert senses and keen desires, must now be left behind. The crops that were raised thereon have been harvested and garnered and done with. Now it is evening, the time to leave the enclosure of labour for the open road; to set out for home, where peace awaits us. Have we not been toiling and moiling through the live-long day for this very home,—the Home which is greatness itself, the abode of joy? From that joy did we come, to that joy shall we now return. If that be not so, what then have we been sweating for, *what then?*

After the infant leaves the womb, it still has to remain close to its mother for a time, remaining attached in spite of its

detachment, until it can adapt itself to its new freedom. Such is the case in the third stage of life, when man though aloof from the world still remains in touch with it, while preparing himself for the final stage of complete freedom. He still gives to the world of his store of wisdom and accepts its support, but this interchange is not of the same intimate character as in the stage of the householder, there being a new sense of distance.

Then at last comes a day when even such free relations have their end, and the emancipated soul steps out of all bonds to face the Supreme Soul. Having fulfilled the demands of all worldly relations, he must now prepare for the gain of new relations with the Infinite. Just as a good housewife, while dealing with diverse men and things in the course of her duties, is after all doing the work of her husband's household all the time, acknowledging at every step her relationship with him, yet, at the end of the day, she puts aside all such work, performs her toilet afresh and, thus purified and rejoicing, betakes herself alone with her husband to the privacy of their own particular chamber, so does the soul, whose world-work is done, put away all finite matters and come all alone to its communion with its Beloved, finding in that consummation the perfection of its own life.

Only in this way can man's world-life be truly lived from one end of it to the other, without being engaged at every step in trying conclusions with death, nor being overcome, when death comes in due course, as by a conquering enemy.

For, this four-fold way of India attunes the life of man to the grand harmony of the universe, leaving no room for untrained desires to forget their simple relations therewith and to pursue their destructive career unchecked, but leading them on to their ultimate relations with the Supreme. Whatever other end we may place before ourselves,—Patriotism, Philanthropy, however big the name,—it can never lead us to finality, but will leave us in the lurch suddenly, in the midst of our activities, with the question ringing in our ears: *What then, what then?*

I feel that the doubt may arise here: how far is it possible so to mould the whole people of any country? To which I would reply that when we talk of lighting a lamp, we do not mean



setting fire to the whole of it from stand upwards. [When the wick is ablaze at its tip, the whole lamp is said to be alight. Whatever may be the ideal of the righteous life, it finds luminous expression only in the topmost few. If in any country even a small number of its people succeed in realising an ideal, that is a gain for the whole of it.] If ever the day comes in India when her leading men hold aloft the highest Truth and highest Good above all other considerations, and regulate their own lives accordingly, then they will give a special direction, a special power to the efforts of all her people.

There was a day when the Rishis of India were leading such disciplined, purposeful lives, in communion with the Supreme, and their spirit was to be seen at work, not only in the religion, but in the state-craft, the warfare, the commerce, the literature and art, of their time. Not only did Maitreyí say, but the whole country was saying with her :

**Yenáham námrita syám kimaham tena kuryám !**

*What have I to do with these, which are not of immortality?*

If we believe that this protest has been utterly silenced in our country, then indeed a complete submission to and slavish imitation of the conquering foreigner would be the only recourse left to us,—far better success even in that than to be labouring under the perpetual futility of attempting to bring the dead to life !

But that is just what we do not feel and cannot admit. However dire may be the outward degeneration which has overtaken us, there is an inmost core still alive within us, which refuses to acknowledge anything less than the Supreme as the highest gain. Even now when any great soul strikes a higher note, our whole being responds, and no lesser consideration of expediency can stop it from so doing. However we may appear to vie with one another in our outward display of loyalty to Mammon, our real soul is never completely led away thereby.

Now-a-days, on occasions of festivity, we have acquired the habit of adding a foreign brass band to the usual set of festive pipes, thereby creating a horrible confusion of sound. Nevertheless, the plaintive note of our real yearning may yet be dis-

cerned by the sensitive ear, through all its clash and clang. The glamour of European civilisation has captivated our eyes, and our great ambition is to imitate it, as best we can, in our own feeble way. But while, in the public part of our homes, the foreign big drum and blatant trumpet proclaim the pride of wealth and the competition of fashion, those who are in touch with the privacy of our inner life, know that this hideous din does not penetrate there, to drown the auspicious conch-blasts which voice the true festivity in the depths of our heart. However vociferously we may preach the efficacy of European state-craft and social customs and business methods, these cannot fill our hearts,—they rather hurt the ideal of the Highest which is still alive within us, and our soul cries out against them.

We were not always this kind of a market crowd, jostling and elbowing one another so vulgarly, quarreling over privileges and titles, advertising our own worth in bigger and bigger type. The whole thing is sheer imitation and mostly sham. It has no redeeming features of courtesy or gracefulness. But, before this age of make-believe overtook us, we had an inherent dignity of our own, which was not impaired by plain living or poverty. This was for us like a congenital armour which used to protect us against all the insults and trials of our political subjection. But this natural protection has been wheedled away from us, leaving us defenceless and ashamed. Dignity has now become an outside thing which we must bolster up by outward show. As we no longer reckon inward satisfaction to be the fulness of wealth, we have to hunt for its paraphernalia in foreign shops, and never can gather together enough of them. And the unmeaning excitement of this pursuit, which we have come to look upon as the only happiness, has made us, who were once only in partial subjection, to become slaves of the foreigner all over.

But, in spite of all this, I say that it has not worked its way into the core of our being. It is yet of the outside and therefore, perhaps, so excessively obvious. Just because we have *not* become really used to our new acquisitions do we make so much of a turmoil about them, like the exaggerated movements of the inexperienced swimmer.

I still feel sure that if one who is worthy stands before us and proclaims that this insane competition, this ephemeral wealth, this aimless excitement, is not the best for us; that each set of activities have their natural termination; that in the perfection of the ending must be our ultimate fulfilment; and that short of the Supreme all else is but petty and futile,—then, even through the clamour of the market place, such message cannot fail to reach our heart. “True! True!” it will respond at once. “Never was anything truer!” Then our school-learned lessons, on the profits of insensate competition and the glories of blood-stained nationalism, will drop out of our minds and the glitter of armies and the glamour of navies cease to fascinate us.

Moreover, I cannot at all admit that what is good, is good for us alone. It is never true that we must take refuge in meekness because we are weak, or that we want righteousness only as a convenient cloak for hiding our poverty! The ideal held up high by our sages of old was not meant for a particular people, peculiarly situated. It was realised and announced as a truth good for all places and times, and so, in our heart of hearts, we still believe it to be.

To prepare during adolescence, in a spirit of reverence and by a life of discipline, for the world-life in which the soul is to attain maturity amidst the performance of good works; to achieve in the larger life of the third stage the loosening of its worldly bonds so as to qualify the soul for the joy of passing through the portals of death to its freedom,—only through such regulation can human life attain to consistency and fulness of meaning.

If we really believe this, then we must also recognise that each and every people must strive to realise it, overcoming their respective obstacles in their own way, if they would be true to themselves. If they would really live, then everything else,—the luxury of individual riches, the might of nations,—must be counted as subordinate. The soul of man must triumph and liberate itself, if man’s incessant endeavour during all these ages is to attain its fulfilment.

If that is not to be, *what then, what then, what then?*

## WHIFFS OF FAR-EASTERN FRAGRANCE

FROM OKAKURA'S *BOOK OF TEA*.

[On the occasion of our President's journey to the Further East, on an invitation from China, our thoughts cannot but turn to Okakura Kakuzo, of the Land of the Rising Sun, to whose subtle unobtrusive influence our awakening of twenty year's ago was so vitally indebted, and whose dearest dream was this renewal of intimate relations between the members of the Asiatic family of peoples. To his memory we offer here a few of his own flowers, dedicated to the Visva-bharati Ideal that was to be.—*Ed.*]

We Asiatics are appalled by the curious web of facts and fancies which has been woven concerning us. We are pictured as living on the perfume of the lotus, if not on mice and cockroaches. Indian spirituality has been derided as ignorance, Chinese sobriety as stupidity, Japanese patriotism as the result of fatalism.

Why not amuse yourselves at our expense? Asia returns the compliment. There would be further food for merriment if you knew all that we have imagined and written about you. You have been loaded with virtues too refined to be envied, and accused of crimes too picturesque to be condemned. Our wise men, who knew, informed us that you had bushy tails somewhere hidden in your garments, and often dined off a fricasée of new-born babes! Nay, we had something worse against you: we used to think you the most impracticable people on the earth, for you were said to preach what you never practised.

\* \* \*

The beginning of the twentieth century would have been spared the spectacle of sanguinary warfare if Russia had condescended to know Japan better. What dire consequences to humanity lie in this contemptuous ignoring of eastern problems! European Imperialism, which does not disdain to raise the absurd cry of the Yellow Peril, fails to realise that Asia may also waken to a cruel sense of the White Disaster. Let us stop the continents from hurling epigrams at each other, and be sadder, if not wiser, by the mutual gain of half a hemisphere.

Strangely enough, humanity has so far met in the tea-cup. It is the only Asiatic ceremonial which commands universal esteem. The white man has scoffed at our religion and our morals but has accepted the brown beverage without hesitation. The afternoon tea is now an important function in western Society. In the delicate clatter of trays and saucers, in the soft rustle of feminine hospitality, in the common catechism about cream and sugar, we know that the worship of Tea is established. The philosophic resignation of the guest to the fate awaiting him in the dubious decoction proclaims that in this single instance the Oriental spirit reigns supreme.

\* \* \*

The heaven of modern humanity is indeed shattered in the Cyclopean struggle for wealth and power. The world is groping in the shadow of egotism and vulgarity. Knowledge is bought through a bad conscience, benevolence practised for the sake of utility. The East and the West, like two dragons tossed in a sea of ferment, in vain strive to regain the jewel of life. We await the great Avatar to repair the grand devastation. Meanwhile, let us have a sip of tea. The afternoon glow is brightening the bamboos, the fountains are bubbling with delight, the sighing of the pines is heard in our kettle. Let us dream of evanescence, and linger in the beautiful foolishness of things.

\* \* \*

Translation is always a treason, and as a Ming author observes, can at its best be only the reverse side of a brocade,—all the threads are there, but not the subtlety of colour or design. After all, what great doctrine is there which is easy to expound? The ancient sages never put their teachings in systematic form. They spoke in paradoxes, for they were afraid of uttering half-truths. They began by talking like fools and ended by making their hearers wise.

\* \* \*

People are not taught to be really virtuous, but to behave properly. We are wicked because we are frightfully self-conscious. We never forgive others because we know that we ourselves are in the wrong. We nurse a conscience because we

are afraid to tell the truth to others: we take refuge in pride because we are afraid to tell the truth to ourselves. How can one be serious with the world when the world itself is so ridiculous? The spirit of barter is everywhere. Honour and Chastity! Behold the complacent salesman retailing the Good and the True. One can even buy a so-called Religion, which is really but common morality sanctified with flowers and music. Rob the Church of her accessories and what remains behind? Yet the trusts thrive marvellously, for the prices are absurdly cheap,—a prayer for a ticket to heaven, a diploma for an honorable citizenship. Hide yourself under a bushel quickly, for, if your real usefulness were known to the world, you would soon be knocked down to the highest bidder.

\* \* \*

The chief contribution of Taoism to Asiatic life has been in the realm of aesthetics. Chinese historians have always spoken of Taoism as the "art of being in the world," for it deals with the present—ourselves.

It is in us that God meets with Nature, and yesterday parts from to-morrow. The Present is the moving Infinity, the legitimate sphere of the Relative. Relativity seeks adjustment; adjustment is Art. The art of life lies in a constant readjustment to our surroundings.

Taoism accepts the mundane as it is and, unlike the Confucians and the Buddhists, tries to find beauty in our world of woe and worry.

\* \* \*

The special contribution of Zen to Eastern thought was its recognition of the mundane as of equal importance with the spiritual. The seeker after perfection must discover in his own life the reflection of the inner light. The organisation of the Zen monastery was very significant of this point of view.

A Zen monastery differs from those of other Buddhist sects inasmuch as it is meant only to be a dwelling place for the monks. Its chapel is not a place of worship, but a college room where the students congregate for discussion and to practise meditation. To every member, except the Abbot, was assigned some special

work in the care-taking of the monastery. Such services formed a part of the Zen discipline and every least action had to be done absolutely perfectly. Thus many a weighty discussion ensued while weeding the garden, paring a turnip, or serving tea.

Taoism furnished the basis for aesthetic ideals, Zennism made them practical.

\* \* \*

In Religion the future is behind us, in Art the present is the eternal. Art to be fully appreciated, must be true to contemporaneous life. It is not that we should ignore the claims of posterity, but that we should seek to enjoy the present more. It is not that we should disregard the creations of the past, but that we should try to assimilate them into our consciousness. Would that we loved the ancients more and copied them less!

\* \* \*

It is greatly to be regretted that so much of the apparent enthusiasm for Art at the present day has no foundation in real feeling. In this democratic age of ours men clamour for what is popularly considered the best, regardless of their own feelings. They want the costly, not the refined; the fashionable, not the beautiful. To the masses, the contemplation of illustrated periodicals, the worthy product of their own industrialism, would give more digestible food for artistic enjoyment than the early Italians or the Ashikaga masters, whom they pretend to admire. As a Chinese critic complained many centuries ago, "People criticise a picture by their ear." It is this lack of genuine appreciation that is responsible for the pseudo-classic horrors that to-day greet us wherever we turn.

\* \* \*

Rikiu was watching his son Shoan as he swept and watered the garden path. "Not clean enough," said Rikiu, when Shoan had finished his task, and bade him try again.

After a weary hour the son turned to Rikiu: "Father, there is nothing more to be done. The steps have been washed for the third time, the stone lanterns and the trees are well

sprinkled with water, moss and lichen are shining with a fresh verdure; not a twig, not a leaf have I left on the ground."

"Young fool," chided the father, "that is not the way a garden path should be swept." Saying this, Rikiu stepped into the garden, shook a tree and scattered over the path gold and crimson leaves, scraps of the brocade of Autumn!

\* \* \*

The Japanese method of interior decoration differs from that of the Occident, where we see objects arranged symmetrically on mantelpieces and elsewhere. In Western houses we are often confronted with what appears to us useless re-iteration. We find it trying to talk to a man while his full-length portrait stares at us from behind his back. We wonder which is real, he of the picture or he who talks, and feel a curious conviction that one of them must be a fraud. Many a time have we sat at a festive board contemplating, with a secret shock to our digestion, the representation of abundance on the dining room walls. Why these pictured victims of chase and sport? Why the display of family plate, reminding us of those who have dined and are dead?

\* \* \*

In the trembling grey of a spring dawn, when the birds were whispering in mysterious cadence among the trees, have you not felt that they were talking to their mates about the flowers? The primeval man in offering the first garland to his maiden thereby transcended the brute. He entered the realm of art when he perceived the subtle use of the useless.

In joy or sadness, flowers are our constant friends. We eat, drink, sing, dance and flirt with their help. We wed and christen with flowers. We dare not die without them. We have even attempted to speak in the language of flowers. How could we live without them? But sad as it is, we cannot conceal the fact that in spite of our companionship with flowers, we have not risen very far above the brute. Shrine after shrine has crumbled before our eyes; but one altar forever is preserved, that whereon we burn incense to the supreme idol,—ourselves. Our god



is great and money is his prophet. We devastate Nature in order to make sacrifice to him. What atrocities do we not perpetrate in the name of culture and refinement !

Tell me gentle flowers, teardrops of the stars, nodding your heads to the bees as they sing of the sunbeams, are you aware of the fearful doom that awaits you ? Dream on, sway and frolic while you may in the gentle breezes of summer. To-morrow a ruthless hand will close around your throats. You will be wrenched asunder limb by limb and borne away from your homes. The wretch, she may be passing fair. She may say how lovely you are while her fingers are still moist with your blood. Tell me, will this be compensation ?

Flowers, if you were in the land of the Mikado, you would meet a dread personage armed with scissors and a tiny saw. He would call himself a Master of Flowers. He would cut, bend, and twist you into those impossible positions which he thinks it proper that you should assume. He would contort your muscles and dislocate your bones like any osteopath. He would burn you with red-hot coals to stop your bleeding, and thrust wires into you to assist your circulation. It would be his boast that he could thus keep life within you for a week or two longer. What crimes could you have committed in your past incarnation to warrant such punishment ?

The wanton waste of flowers among western communities is even more appalling. The number of flowers cut daily to adorn the ball rooms and bauquet tables of Europe and America, to be thrown away on the morrow, must be something enormous ; if strung together they might garland a continent ! Beside this utter waste of life the guilt of the Flower-master becomes insignificant. He at least selects his victims with careful foresight, and after death does honour to their remains. Nothing is more pitiful than to see a faded flower remorselessly flung upon a dung heap.

Insects can sting. The bird whose plumage is sought can fly from its pursuer ; the furred animal whose coat you covet may hide at your approach. Alas ! the only flower known to have wings is the butterfly ; all the rest stand helpless before the destroyer. Have you not noticed that the wild flowers are

becoming scarcer every year? Perhaps they have migrated to heaven.

Even in the case of pot flowers we are inclined to suspect the selfishness of man. Why take plants from their homes and ask them to bloom midst strange surroundings? Is it not like asking birds to sing and mate, cooped up in cages? The ideal lover of flowers is he who visits them in their native haunts, losing himself amid their mysterious fragrance as he wanders in the twilight. It was this spirit which moved the Empress Komio, one of our most renowned Nara sovereigns, as she sang : "If I pluck thee, my hand will defile thee, O flower ! Standing in the meadows as thou art, I offer thee to the Buddhas of the past, of the present, of the future".

However let us not be too sentimental. Said Laotse : "Heaven and Earth are pitiless." Said Kobodaishi : "Flow, flow, flow, the current of life is ever onward. Die, die, die, death comes to all." Destruction faces us wherever we turn. Change is the only eternal,—why not welcome Death as Life? They are but counterparts, one of the other,—the Night and Day of Brahma. Why not destroy flowers if thereby we can evolve new forms ennobling the world idea? We only ask them to join in our sacrifice to the Beautiful. Perhaps the flowers can appreciate the full significance of it. They are not cowards, like men.

Some flowers glory in death—certainly the Japanese cherry blossoms do, as they freely surrender themselves to the winds. For a moment they hover like bejewelled clouds and dance above the crystal streams; then, as they sail away on the laughing waters, they seem to say : "Farewell O Spring ! We are on to Eternity !"

## IN GOLD AND GREY

By HARINDRANATH CHATTOPADHYAYA.

Grey squirrels on their boughs, pink water-cranes  
Along the water's edge, white-coated sheep  
Upon a hill, blue peacocks in the rains  
Are born between God's waking and our sleep.

The outcaste driven from his parents' doors,  
Men toiling like dumb beasts, and babes who weep,  
The ragged beggar, women turned to whores  
Are born between our waking and God's sleep.

## OUR ELDER BROTHERS, THE KOL PEOPLE

By SUNITI KUMAR CHATTERJI.

The languages of India belong to four great linguistic families—Indo-Aryan or Aryan, Dravidian, Austric (Kol and Mon-Khmer), and Tibeto-Chinese. It is not necessary to discuss the Aryan and the Dravidian languages. Since the dawn of history, these have been the speeches of civilisation in India, and as such have been studied from very ancient times—the oldest extant literary remains of Aryan the Vedic hymns, going back to c. 1,200 B.C. at the latest, and those of Dravidian, the oldest Tamil compositions, dating from about the second century after Christ.

The Aryan speech is accepted almost on all hands to have been introduced into India from beyond the north-western frontier. About the Dravidian, opinion is divided, but most scholars regard it also as being originally extra-Indian, having been brought to India in pre-historic times, before the advent of the Aryans.

The Tibeto-Chinese languages, which are spoken in the north-east of India, fall into two groups, Tibeto-Burman (including Tibetan and dialects, the various Sub-Himalayan speeches, the dialects of the Bodo group in North-eastern and Eastern Bengal, the various groups of Assam and Burma frontier speeches, and Burmese), and Siamese-Chinese (of which group one language, Ahom, was introduced into India in 1228 when the Tai or Shan people from North-eastern Burma conquered Assam, and this speech is now almost entirely extinct.)

The original homeland of Tibeto-Chinese seems to have been in Western China, and Tibeto-Chinese speakers came to India through the eastern and north-eastern frontiers in very late times, compared with Dravidian and Aryan,—at a period probably not much anterior to Christ. There remain the languages of the Austric family, namely, the Kol languages (like Santali, Mundari, Kurdu, Gadaba, Savara and Juang), and Khasi : these, now spoken by less than 3.5 millions (Kol about

3.2 millions, and Khasi, nearly .18 millions), alone have a right to be regarded as representatives of the autochthonous language-family of India.

\* \* \*

The Kol people at present are confined to a comparatively limited tract, in Central India and Eastern India, in the Central Provinces, in Chota Nagpur, in Orissa and in West Bengal. At one time they were spread all over Northern India, and may be in Southern India as well. Traces of a Kol substratum have been found in some of the Tibeto-Chinese speeches of the Sub-Himalayan tracts, in the so-called 'pronominalised languages' like Kanawari and Darniya, Khambu and Dhimal. These dialects look like being Tibeto-Burman modified by original Kol speakers who have adopted it.

Then, there is the language called Burushaski, which is spoken to the north-west of Kashmir, in the districts of Yasin and Hunza-Nagpur; this language is a puzzle, and it has not yet been possible to affiliate it to any known family of speech. But a recent theory about Burushaski is that it is connected with Kol; which theory, if proved, would seem to extend the vista of Kol, or of Primitive Kol, further beyond the Sub-Himalayan limits.

Kol traditions have dim memories of a period of Kol settlement and rule in Northern India and isolated tribes like the Cheros of South-eastern United Provinces were originally Kol speaks. The Bhil people of Rajputana and Khandesh, now speaking dialects of the Aryan Rajasthani, are in all probability of Kol race; and the 'Kolis' are another aboriginal tribe in these tracts. The Kol area thus extended to Gujrat in the West.

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The Aryans, when they first came in touch with the aboriginal Kols seem to have called them *Nishádas*. After the establishment of the Aryans in the Gangetic plain, most of the Kols were Aryanised, and became transformed into the lower orders of Hindu society, and so lost their separate linguistic and cultural identity. Those who retreated into the hills and forests, and kept up their primitive ways, continued to be called

wild men' (Nisháda, Sabara, Pulinda, etc.) by the Aryan; and with increased knowledge of their life and manners, on the part of the Aryan speakers, the names Bhilla and Kolla (*cf. hor, ho, koro-man*, in the various Kol dialects) came to be given to them, probably by the middle of the first millennium after Christ. From these Middle Indo-Aryan words, our New Indo-Aryan terms Bhil and Kol are derived.

As numbers of Kol speakers became Aryanised, it is natural to expect that some of their words and their habits of thinking would be introduced into the new language of their adoption, and a few of these would persist even to the present. That a similar thing happened with regard to Dravidian has become one of the commonest hypotheses in Indo-Aryan linguistics\*. The habit of counting by twenties, so persistent in Bengal, Bihar and the Upper Gangetic plain, is probably to be traced to the influence of Kol, in which the highest unit of computation is twenty. Some peculiarities of the Bihari (Maithili and Maghai) verbal forms are also perhaps due to Kol.

\* \* \*

Unfortunately, there was not much curiosity felt in ancient times about the language of foreign or barbarous peoples, although their peculiar ways often attracted men. If a few old Dravidian or Kol sentences or words were preserved as such in some early Sanskrit text, how very precious they would have been for the student of language! Kumarila Bhatta in the 7th century A. C., in his 'Tantra-várttika' quoted casually a few

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\*A French scholar has recently shown (J. Przyluski in the 'Memoires de la Société de Linguistique,' Paris, Vols. 22 and 24) that the Sanskrit words *kadali*, plantain; *kambala*, blanket; *sarkara*, sugar, and the group of words *linga*, *langula*, *langala*, *laguda*, *lakuta*, are in origin Kol words. It has also been suggested (by Prof. Jules Bloch of Paris, in a private communication) that the word *mayura*, peacock, is Kol, rather than Dravidian; and *tambula*, betel leaf, 'as M. Przyluski' told me, seems also to be Kol; the root of the word is probably to be found in Khasi *bal* betel leaf; *cf. Bengali bar-ai, bar-ai*, cultivator of the betel vine. The word *utpala*, lotus' seems to be Kol as well (*cf. Mundari upal-ba*, floating flower). The Aryan name of the mohwa tree, Skt. *madhuka*, Neo-Indo-Aryan, *mahua*, looks like being based on the Kol *madkam* or *ma(n)dukam*. There must be many more words, which are sure to be found out on investigation. Stray words in the modern Aryan languages, like Hindi *jim-na*, to eat; (*cf. Kol jom*); Panjabi *kuri*, a girl (*cf. Santali kurt*), dialectal Bengali *kamra*, buffalo, (*cf. Ho kera*); Hindi *chiriya*, *chimriya*, bird, which is usually connected with Sanskrit *chataka*, sparrow (*but cf. Kol cemrem*, bird); Bengali *mera*, ram (*cf. Kol merom*, goat); Bengali *meni*, cat (*cf. Kurku minu*); and possibly many more, seem to be of Kol origin.

Tamil words, apparently as they were spoken in his time; these side by side with the forms actually preserved in the old Tamil of literature and of inscriptions, have opened up a new line of argument about the phonetics of old Tamil and of primitive Dravidian. A stray Iranian word in Herodotus, or a Gallic word in some classical writer, is as valuable to the philologist as a rare coin or inscription is to the historian. For Kol, even such stray words are absent in the oldest literary remains of India, in Sanskrit.

The Kol or other non-Aryan speaker came under the spell of the superior culture of the Aryan, and he quietly gave up his own language, and accepted that of his master or civiliser. Only here and there, in place-names, in expressions not entirely ousted by Aryan, have relics of his old speech survived, and that too in a hopelessly mutilated form. And with such non-Aryan speakers as remained faithful to their old life and old speech, the language continued to have its normal development.

It was the scientific curiosity of the 19th century that first began to enquire into apparently unprofitable subjects like the customs and languages of uncultured peoples, which no one would be sorry to let die. This curiosity, of course, was brought to India by the European scholar. The Kol languages were taken up by about the middle of the last century. B. H. Hodgson first studied them, and he thought they were allied to Dravidian, a view in which he was followed by other scholars (among whom the Rev. F. Hahn is the latest, although this view has been given up by most students); and Max Muller in 1854 first dissociated the Kol languages from Dravidian, and classed them as an independent group, which he named Munda.

Munda (=Skt. *munda-ka*) means a 'head-man' and is a term of respect among the tribe known to Hindus and Europeans as Mundas and Kols, but calling themselves simply *Horoko* meaning men. This tribe number barely half a million. The corresponding term of respect among the Santals, by far the largest Kol tribe (1.7 millions) is *Manjhi*, which is an Aryan word meaning 'man of the middle' (from Skt. *madhya-ka*). Kol is thus in every respect a better name than Munda: it is an accurate term, an ancient term, and a term which includes the

distant Kurkus as well : only the tribes of Orissa, the Juangs, the Gadabas and the Savaras, may not strictly be brought under Kol, as they seem to have lost the word corresponding to the Santal *hor* : but their speeches show sufficient agreement with the Kol speeches to sanction their inclusion within the group.

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So much for the term Kol. Meanwhile other languages of South-eastern Asia and Indonesia, as well as of the Pacific islands, both of civilised and barbarous peoples, were being studied. There is the Mon people in Burma, numbering over 220,000, now confined to a small tract round about the Gulf of Martaban, and in the part of Siam adjacent to it. The Mons differ both in race and language from the Burmese, who are now the dominant people of Burma. At one time the Mons were spread over the greater part of Burma. In the early centuries after Christ, and possibly earlier, they had received Indian culture and Indian religion Buddhism and Brahmanism, from the people of the Kalinga country, and possibly also from those of Bengal and Upper India, who used to go to Burma as merchants and adventurers, and established themselves as the dominant race there.

The ancestors of the present-day Burmese were at that time wild Tibeto-Chinese speaking tribes living to the north of Burma, and they poured down into the valleys of the country, established themselves first in the north, and after a protracted struggle with the Mons, lasting for centuries, at last forced them to the south, put an end to their rule, and entirely absorbed them in Pegu and in South Burma generally. The Indian culture of the Mons, with its Buddhist religion and its Indian script, was taken up by the Burmans. Now, it has been found out that the Mon language, which has epigraphical and other documents some thousand years old, presents such a striking similarity with Kol, that they must both be referred to a common origin.

The Khasi language in Assam, again, is an island of alien speech in a tract in which the non-Aryan languages are all Tibeto-Burman. Khasi agrees with Kol and Mon, and is thus



apparently a link in a chain once extending from Central India to Burma, the other links in between being lost. This chain extends further to the East.

In Cambodia live the Khmers, now numbering over 1.5 millions, and their speech is a sister dialect to Mon. The Khmers were once spread over Siam; and culture, religion, legends, art and letters, everything was brought to them by settlers from India. By the 6th century A. C. the land of the Khmers, like that of the Mons had become part of a Greater India. The history of the Khmers presents a parallel to that of their cousins the Mons. Indianised in culture and religion and in general mentality,\*though not in language, they were overwhelmed by the Tibeto-Chinese speaking Siamese, coming down to the south like the Burmese. The Siamese forced the Khmers to Cambodia, where they are now confined; but, like the Burmese, they obtained their Buddhistic religion, their Indian culture, their writing, from the people they conquered.

In Indo-China, there are other isolated speeches, like the Palaung, the Wa, the Stieng, the Bahnar, etc., which are allied to Kol-Khasi-Mon-Khmer.

We can very well think of a period when one type of speech extended from Gujarat, the Ganges Valley, and the Himalayan slopes, through Bengal, right up to the Mekhong basin. We can imagine that about the beginning of the Christian era, and during the first five hundred years after Christ, when Indian influences were actively working among the Mons and the Khmers, all this was of the nature of civilising the Kol peoples in India itself. Aryanised Kols, welded into one people with Aryanised Dravidians from the Ganges Valley and the Central Indian tracts, undoubtedly had some share in the work of bringing civilisation to their kinsmen in Indo-China, side by side with the true Aryans, Brahmans and Kshatriyas, and mixed groups from Upper India.

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The most important Kol language, from the point of view of number and extent, is unquestionably Santali. The Rev.

Bodding thinks, in his most valuable work on the phonetics of Santali, that it is more faithful to its native Kol character than its sister-dialect Mundari, which is sometimes regarded as the purest dialect. Santali is spoken by a larger number than the Aryan Assamese, for instance, and also many other better known languages of the world. The difference between Santali and other Kol speeches is very small indeed.

The Santals were originally in Hazaribagh district, where some 5 centuries ago they and the Mundas formed one people. They are now found in the Western Bengal districts of Midnapore, Bankura, Bankura, Burdwan and Birbhum, and in the Santal Parganas, in Manbhum and in Morbhanj; and scattered communities of Santals are found elsewhere. They came within the Bengali-speaking area only very recently, mostly in the 18th and early 19th centuries. There were in West Bengal other Kol-speaking tribes, brothers and cousins of the Santals, who have long been Aryanised possibly the Suhmas and the Radhas, about whose barbaric character the Jaina texts dating from about 3rd century B. C. testify, and who have given their names to West Bengal, and have long since merged in the lower ranks of a Bengali-speaking nation.

The ancestors of Hindu castes like the Bagdis, the Bauris, the Hadis and the Doms were in all probability Kols. Some of the customs of the Hadis and Doms in and about Calcutta seem very much like Kol: witness their Cult of Bir-Káli, who is propitiated by offerings of rice-beer and sacrifice of pigs, and who is so called 'because she roams about in the forests,' as a Dom once explained to me (the Kol word for forest being *bir*). And perhaps also there was another tribe, the Chuhádas, whose name has given the Bengali word for a wild fellow, a ruffian,—*cho(h)ád*. The caste-name *Chuhád* also recalls the *Chuhṛas*, a sweeper caste in the Panjab.

Some of the Kol speakers, when they were of the ruling classes, even became Kshatriyas within the Hindu pale. The Santals must have been living to the west of the Bengali or Aryanised area, and must have been known to the Bengali Hindus of pre-Moslem times, as an important border-tribe: the

very name by which the Indians (and following them the Europeans) know them means 'borderers': *Saomtal*, from Old Bengali *Sawamta-wala*, Skt. *Samanta-pala*.

Next in importance to the Santals are the Mundas, numbering over 400,000, and the Hos, over 300,000 and allied tribes of Chota Nagpur and Central Provinces. They possess the same traditions, their religious practices and beliefs are the same, and their ways of life are identical.

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The Kol tribes, as represented by the Santals and the Mundas and the Hos, are thus among the most primitive peoples in India, possibly the oldest people in our country, after the Negroid stocks found in South India. And they are among the most lovable of peoples. In their primitive and unsophisticated state, they are like big children: frank and sincere, honest and straight-forward, even when 'civilisation' has penetrated to them and sought to spoil them in every way; gentle and peaceful by disposition, hardworking enough to meet their simple needs, loving flowers, loving mirth and music, loving dance and song, generally with strong family attachments, living a clean and healthy life in the midst of nature: they present the picture of a life almost idyllic in its charm for the over-civilised mortal in the cities.

The poetry underlying much of the life of the Kols, where they have not been spoiled, has been felt and appreciated by people of culture in Bengal. The Kol already figures in Bengali fiction, in a number of short stories, full of pathos, full of sympathy. His life has been viewed and studied here and there by people who have come in touch with him. The neo-Bengal School of Painting has given us some beautiful paintings of Kol life,—Santal girls, Santal couples, and above all, that glorious picture by Nandalal Bose, *Dance in the Forest*, a group of Kol girls dancing to the sound of the drum (*dumang* or *mádal*) in the flowering forest—a vision of colour and of throbbing life.

The religion of the Kols is animism, or worship of invisible nature spirits, called *Bongas*, with a supreme spirit *Sing-bonga*,

who is identified with the Sun or Day-light. Sing-bonga in the words of the Rev. Father Hoffmann, is the invisible creator of everything, the ruler of all, the utterly great or supreme one, the god who is appealed to in distress, the solemn witness of men's good and bad deeds. We have there a conception of the deity which is quite lofty, and which is not much removed from that of the average man in a civilised community. In addition to these *bongas*, the Kols believe in the spirits of the fathers, and the ritual of worship connected with this cult has a poetic aspect too.

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It is now difficult, however, to dissociate from the current Kol beliefs and religious and other observances the genuine Kol elements from those adopted by the Kols from their Hindu neighbours. It must also be noted that a great many ideas, cults and practices of popular Hinduism owe their origin to the Kols and other non-Aryans who have long ago been brought within the Hindu fold; nay, in philosophic Hinduism too, some notions, *e.g.* that of transmigration, which cannot be traced to Indo-European sources, are essentially of the Indian soil, and had their origin undoubtedly in the animistic religion of the non-Aryans absorbed in the Hindu people.

The Kols do not have civilisation, but like all primitive people—the Kols emphatically are not savages—they have a culture, which is bound up with their language and their life. Kol life with its socio-religious institutions, its periodical festivals and gatherings, its songs and dances, its vivid style of ornament, its sense of wonder for life around, in the passing on of its tales and traditions from generation to generation, has kept up this culture as a living thing. It is this culture and these traditions that make life beautiful. When these are destroyed, with nothing to take their place except a material civilisation that looks only to the body, men become savages in the midst of civilisation; and such civilised savages are not uncommon in Europe and America, both among the richest classes who only worship Mammon, and among the slum-dwellers.

Kol life, however, cannot keep up much longer its primitive outlook, which is that of the forester and hunter. The times

and outside influences are too strong for it. There is the influx of *Dikus*, or Hindu and Musalman outsiders, into the heart of the Kol country : and outside influences in the shape of Hinduism and Christianity are modifying profoundly the life of the Kol, and undermining his national culture, making it lose its special features, and so destroying it.

Hinduism has spread among the Kols without any organised propaganda ; the changes brought about through contact with Hinduism have been gradual and unconscious, and, it seems, without any antagonism from the Kols. Whole communities have accepted Hindu notions and practices in their religious and social life without there being any appreciable disturbance of the milieu in which the Kol lived and thought.

This, of course, has been impossible with Christianity, as a militant religion which claimed to have the truth all to itself. It rejected all ideas and notions not in conformity with its own, and instead of seeking to transmute them gradually to something higher, it sought to sweep them away to make room for another world of ideas totally incomprehensible to a primitive people, a world evolved in a society entirely different. Of course, this was done with the best of intentions and the deepest of convictions. But this has brought about, in those cases where it has been successful, a total dislocation of the old life with its own standard ; and, while substituting many of the amenities of civilisation and bringing in the outward forms of a nobler faith, it has seriously impaired the stability and often the self-respect of those who have been overwhelmed by it.

I do not mean in the least to disparage the message of the God-man Christ. But, in days gone by, there has been too often, on the part of the average missionary, a blindness to all that is good and noble and beautiful in 'heathen' or barbarous culture, an inability to appreciate the good points in a primitive or non-Christian society. It must be recognised on the other hand that there has also been no lack of missionaries, from time to time, who could rise above the ordinary prejudices.

I have made this digression only to pay tribute to the work done by these enlightened missionaries, who, actuated by a

broader humanity and by a scientific curiosity, have recognised the value of native culture, studied and systematised it and sought to preserve the best elements therein, while endeavouring to bring to it the nobler spiritual life according to the teachings of Jesus. We are grateful to missionaries like the late Rev. L. O. Skrefsrud and the Rev. P. O. Bodding, and to the Rev. Father J. Hoffmann, and the Rev. A. Nottrott, and others, for enabling us to add another world to our domain of study and the sympathetic understanding of our brother-man, the Kol folk.

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The Kols lacked intellectual life; they never had any system of writing, and they could not as a consequence have had any literature as a conscious production of their cultural life. But they have a rich store-house of traditional tales and songs. Story-telling and song-craft are common to all Kol peoples, as well as music (playing on the deep-toned drum, called *dumang* by the Kols and *mádal* by Bengalis, and on the bamboo-flute) and dancing.\*

Stray songs from the Santali have appeared in the Bengali periodicals; and a collection of Santali songs appears to have been made by the Rev. P. O. Bodding (*cf.* pp. 100-105 of his *Materials for a Santali Grammar*). It seems that the Santal, although he possesses a musical soul, has expressed himself better in narrative than in song.

The Mundari songs are among the most beautiful specimens of poetry of the simple and primitive type: every one who has read them will agree that they can take their place among the fairest flowers in the garden of Indian poetry. These are all little lyrics, there being no long poems or ballads. Love, descriptions of nature, the chase, dialogues, laments, and occasional narration of some big event,—these are the subject matters of Kol poetry.

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\*The outside world has been enabled to taste the beauty and sweetness of this fountain-head of primitive nature and love-poetry through the monographs of the Rev. Nottrott (*Mundari-Kol Lieder*, in the *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* iii, pp. 381 ff., referred to by Grierson in the *Linguistic Survey of India*), of the Rev. Father J. Hoffmann (*Mundari Poetry, Music and Dances in the Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1907, Vol. II No. 5, pp. 85-120), of Mr. Sarat Chandra Roy, the eminent Bengali anthropologist, now Professor in the University of Patna (in his *Mundas and their Country*, Calcutta, 1912, pp. 508 ff. and in the pages of the *Hindustan Review* subsequently), and of a few other scholars.

Into what bunch of flowers hast thou grown, maiden?  
Thou art fragrant like the flowers.  
Into what bower hast thou blossomed, maiden?  
Thou art full of perfume like a bouquet.  
(Or) dost thou wash thyself in flowers, maiden,  
(That) thou art fragrant like the flowers?  
(Or) dost thou bathe in blossoms, maiden,  
(That) thou art full of perfume like a bouquet?

How lovely thy head with wealth of waving hair,  
Its locks with red twine tied in round knot fair.  
O ! day and night, thou wreaths of flowers dost weave,  
For thee my heart doth burn and bosom heave !  
How bracelets and armlets those fair arms bedeck.  
And necklace bright adorns thy beauteous neck.  
Sweet sounds the jingling *pola* on thy feet,  
For thee my heart doth burn and anxious beat.

The *dumang* sounds at Kot Karambu,  
My heart leaps at the sound,  
At the sound.

The *kartal* rings at Barigra,  
My heart with glee doth bound  
At the sound.

The *dumang* sounds at Kot Karambu,  
O! haste, my dear, to the dance,  
To the dance.

The *kartal* clanks at Barigara,  
O! rise, my dear, from thy trance  
To the dance.

The traditional tales and narratives of the Kols have been partially collected. In 1870-71 the late Rev. L. Q. Shrefsrud had fortunately got an old Santal sage named Kòlèan (= *Kalyána*) to narrate to him the traditions of his people and accounts of their social life and institutions, which he faithfully took down and published in the original Santali in 1887. This book—*Horkoren Mare Hapramko-reak' Katha*—is the great classic in their language, which, thanks to this enlightened Christian Missionary, the Santals have been enabled to possess. The language of this prose Purana and Grihya and Dharma Sutra of the Santals is in its purest form, such as it was spoken half a century ago, when Santal life was much more self-contained. But it already shows a large number of Aryan (Bihari and Bengali) words; and there are interspersed Bengali and Bihari songs, showing the invasion of Hindu ideas into their domestic and religious life.

It is pleasing to note that as an appendix to the second edition of the Rev. Skrefsrud's book, Mr. Bodding prints the resolutions which a number of representative Santals passed at Dumka in February, 1916, expressing 'what they would wish to become the law of inheritance of women among Santals:' a fitting pendant to a collection, of national importance for the Santals, of their social institutions and traditions, which, it may be hoped, they will not let die, in so far as they are beautiful, for all the Christian religion which they might be receiving.

In addition to the traditional stories, and stories relating to witch-craft, the tales dealing with the *bongas* and their relations with men and women are specifically Kol. These last are not many. The English reader will find then in the collection of Santal Tales by C. H. Bompas (*Folklore of the Santal Parganas*, London, 1909). But some at least among them are very beautiful, and they certainly ought to be better known. Some of these deal with the old theme of the love of a mortal youth or maiden and a sylvan spirit or godling. There are only two or three representative genres.

A typical story is of a girl who goes to the forest to pluck leaves with her companions, meets a forest spirit or godling, a



*bonga kora*, who generally lives in a cave, stays with him, and is happy, but her friends and parents do not like this connection, and they try to kill her *bonga* lover, and bring her home; but the *bonga* does not give up the girl; her head aches and aches, and she dies in a short time, apparently to join her lover in the world of the *bongas*.

Or it is of a young herdsboy tending his buffaloes or cattle and playing on his bamboo flute in the woody hills, and he is loved by a *bonga* girl, who comes to him, looking like a pretty human maiden. This is the Kol version of the myth of Aphrodite and the herdsman Anchises, and other Greek stories, and is no less charming. The *bonga* girl inhabits a spring, 'on the margin of which grew many *ahar* flowers', a little detail which the Santal narrator gives. The herdsboy goes into the waters of the spring to pluck flowers for the girl, and she casts some sort of spell on her lover, and takes him down along the spring to her people in the *bonga* world. There the seats are coiled snakes, and crouching tigers and leopards are the watch-dogs.

The *bongas* sometimes go out hunting with their tigers and leopards, and men cutting wood in the jungle are their quarry. Sometimes the young man comes out and lives as a man among men, but meets secretly his *bonga* wife in some underwater place in the forest, and his affairs prosper exceedingly, and he becomes a *jan guru*—a man of oracles. This reminds one of the old Roman legend of King Numa and the nymph Egeria. The *bongas* are sometimes mischievous creatures, thievish and sly, who however can be non-plussed by cleverer men.

These Kol stories of the *bongas* resemble more than anything else the Celtic (Irish) stories about the fairy folk the *sidhe* or *shee*, and their loves with mortals; and the brownies and elves of Northern European popular mythology. Ethnology might see traces of a pre-Kol race in these *bonga* stories, just as the *shee* are but pre-Irish dwellers of Ireland translated into the domain of legend; but in the meanwhile, we can enjoy them as the embodiment of the mystery and romance of forest life such as it impressed the untutored Kol.

The Vedic Aryan peopled the forest and the waters and the hills with the goddess Aranyáni, with wood-nymphs and with gods, with the Apsaras and the Gandharvas; the Greek with wood and water-nymphs, the Dryads and the Nereids, the Satyrs and the god Pan; and the Kol saw the *bonga kora* and the *bonga kuri*—fairy youths and maidens—in the deep virgin woods of India that encompassed his hamlet, or his homestead.

The study of Kol language, ethnology, folk-lore, has thus its important aspects. A great part of India has never been predominantly the Arya's country. In the making of our people, at least among the masses of the lower ranks, there has been undoubtedly a Kol element, and a strong one too. Certain tracts, *e.g.*, the Central Indian plateaux, are overwhelmingly Kol. We shall be guilty of gracelessness and of national snobbery if in Northern India, in the pride of our Aryan language and culture, we ignore our humble non-Aryan relations—the Kols, the Bodos and others.

The study of the Kol speeches as a discipline, like all scientific studies, has a unique value for itself as well as with reference to the study of our Aryan mother-tongues. To unfold the grammatical structure of Santali or Mundari, of course, would be a pleasure only for the specialist. But a slight knowledge of Kol would help ordinary people also, while studying modern Indo-Aryan philology, to find out the points of contact between Kol and Aryan, where Aryan has assimilated to Kol, about which any Aryan speaker, with a certain amount of culture, and interest in his mother-tongue, cannot fail to feel curious.

(From **The Study of Kol** in the Calcutta Review for September, 1923).

## THE JURIDICAL LIFE IN FRANCE, AND THE LAWYER

[*A lecture delivered under the auspices of the Visva-Bharati  
Sammilani.*]

By PROF. HENRI SOLUS.

I need not hesitate to express the joy which I felt when I was asked to speak to you on the juridical life in France. I know I am amongst friends; and between friends, is it not true, one takes a special pleasure in communicating one's thoughts and exchanging one's experiences? Nevertheless, I must confess to you that, after having accepted the invitation to speak on this subject, I was scared, to a certain extent, by the vastness of its scope.

Is there not the danger of losing our way in the survey of so extensive a domain, the veritable world by itself, which forms the juridical life of a nation? That is why I resolved to find in that world a god who would there create order and unity, a god around whom we could group the principal institutions, a god who would be—to speak a little arbitrarily—the centre of that juridical life, the aspects of which are manifold and complex.

I had to find that Divinity: I thought immediately of the Lawyer.

This choice is not exclusively inspired by the desire of flattering ourselves, dear gentlemen, who belong to the Bar, or who have the intention to enter there some day. My choice is rather the result of general considerations founded on reason.

In France, indeed, the rôle and the authority of the Lawyer in the development of its juridical life as well as in the evolution of its political and social life, are, and always have been, considerable. In the grand family of the juridical officials (*Les gens de robe*), which in the Middle-Ages enjoyed a great consideration and influence, Lawyers held a preponderating place. Their corporations, their Bar, was a real social force; it nurtured

invaluable traditions of honour and probity; and, above all, it cultivated the most noble independence in the face of State power.

In the Revolution of 1789, which took a good account of the lawyer, the Bar, amongst other corporations, was one of the first to be suppressed. And Napoleon himself, jealous of his own authority which he wanted to make decisive in the realisation of his great projects, did not hesitate to proclaim: "So long as I shall have the sword by my side, I want the tongue of the lawyers to be amputated, if they use it against the government."

This kind of feeling against Lawyers, however, did not last for a long time. The Bar was re-established a little after, along with the Faculties of Law. And gradually, the order of the Advocate recovered, in the juridical life of the nation, all the lustre, authority and influence to which I shall refer presently.

Please remember, meanwhile, that the Divinity whom I have chosen wants neither antiquity nor authority and, I may be permitted to add, lacks neither grace nor charm, since in France, to-day, women also enjoy the privilege of being lawyers.

In reality, for a long time, admission to the Bar was refused to women. But as the result of the evolution of manners, the old notion of the fragility of the fair sex and their inexperience of affairs, which were the principal motives of disqualification, gradually gave way. And the Frenchwoman, by her intelligence and energy, urged on by the growing necessity of earning her own livelihood, soon overcame all hesitation in addressing herself to the difficult task of studying some of the subjects which were formerly considered as the special preserve of men. In course of time, she opened a way for herself into all the so-called "liberal professions"; and having succeeded as artist, as doctor, as professor, even as engineer, she extorted from the the French Legislature, in 1902, the right of being an Advocate.

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, that you are acquainted with the scope of our discourse and the aims which I propose to pursue,—to describe to you the juridical life in France, considering it above all from the stand-point of the Lawyer,—I may be permitted to proceed to the heart of the subject, and shall deal, on the one hand, with the entry of the Lawyer into his profession, and on the other, with his functions therein.

## THE MAKING OF A LAWYER.

To become a lawyer, in France, it is not sufficient that the noble sentiment "to defend widows and orphans" should be deeply rooted in the heart. Before helping citizens to secure their rights, before assisting the judges in their delicate task of administering justice, the Advocate must possess, first of all, the necessary juridical knowledge, attested by academic qualifications of which the diploma of "Licenciate in Law" is the very minimum. Our future lawyer must therefore begin by joining the University, or rather, its Faculty of Law.

In France, indeed, the Universities are the reunion of diverse Faculties, of Law, of Literature, of Science, of Medicine. Every University—there are fifteen, all in the great cities, and most of them very old (the University of Poitiers, to which I have the honour to belong at present, having been founded in the beginning of the 15th century, when Descartes was teaching there, being already full of students as is attested by La Fontaine)—every University, I say however, did not possess all these Faculties corresponding to the different branches of human knowledge; in fact we have even now only 13 Faculties of Law. As a compensating factor, we often find, grouped around about the Universities, many an institute working harmoniously therewith, such as institutes of applied physics and chemistry, commercial institutes, colonial institutes, schools of minerology; schools of fine arts,—a detailed enumeration would be tedious.

To bring our thoughts back to the Lawyer, and reverting to the question of the Faculty of Law, permit me to say that the student, formed in our Lycees by a solid system of secondary education (*enseignement secondaire*), goes thenceforth to pursue in the Faculty of Law a system of high education (*enseignement superieur*) under Professors of the Faculty of Law exclusively devoted to their teaching work, and are finally selected for the Bar after a competitive examination (*concours d'Agregation*) which is held every second year only in Paris. At these examinations appear candidates from the whole of France, all of whom must be proficient in Law and not less than 25 years in age.

Thus we see that a long scientific preparation specially trains

the would-be Advocates for the final test awaiting them, that is to say, over and above all, a proficiency in the studies and books which form the basis of the French juridical science, a knowledge of and ability to expound not only the positive solutions of legal questions emanating from the tribunals, but also the great and fundamental principles of jurisprudence.

As a matter of fact, the Professor in France does not care so much to burden the memory of his students with details of practice and case laws which are easily to be found in books of reference, as to form in them the legal instinct. The Professor strives to make them acquire the reasoning attitude; and with that aim, he brings them in touch with the sources; makes them understand the history of institutions, tracing their evolution; and finally establishes the legal principles and their spirit.

Then, quite in a different direction, the Faculties organize, outside the general lectures (*cours magistraux*), some special lessons called *directions d'études*, throughout which the students are individually initiated into theoretical and practical researches, comparison of texts, juridical discussions with reference to Law Reports, the importance of which grows from day to day. In other words, the theoretical and fundamental notions gathered in the general lectures are strengthened by contact with the practical juridical life.

For that purpose, all the French Faculties of Law are organised in the same manner. There is no gradation or hierarchy. And if the Faculty of Law in Paris has acquired an incomparable halo,—on account of the number and the authority of her professors, selected from the master jurists whose books and teaching have left a permanent mark; on account of the number of her students (more than 8000); on account of her rich collections and library,—the other Faculties of Law in the Provinces are not less flourishing. And as the professors receive their normal official advancements without changing their place, you will understand why there are in all the Faculties some eminent men who remain there attracted by the calm of the Provincial life, so favourable for sustained studies and speculative researches, before they are called to teach in the Faculty of Paris.

Such are, then, the surroundings in which the future Lawyers work in order to become full-fledged jurists. After 3 years of these studies, and after successfully passing the 3 compulsory examinations, he will have the diploma and the title of "Licenciāte in Law". As regards the higher grade of "Doctor of Law" which requires profound studies on the part of young scholars, it is conferred after two further examinations are passed, followed by the sustaining of a thesis. But the title of Doctor, as I told you, is not indispensable for practising as an Advocate, the title of "Licenciate" being deemed to ensure the requisite minimum of legal knowledge.

The fundamental preparation for the duty of Advocacy received in the University, is supplemented in the Palace of Justice itself by another discipline intimately connected with the profession. That stage follows when the lawyer is sworn in. It is now that he has the honour of wearing his robe, of which he is so proud. And, he is initiated either alone, or more often as the junior to some renowned Advocate, into the real business life.

In the Faculty he has received the technical training, in the Palace of Justice he has the first direct contact with practice and procedure. He will plead, he will learn his rights; but at the same time he will be informed of the duties and obligations of his profession, of which the Bar, in keeping with its old traditions of honour and dignity, enforces a strict observance. And, after 3 years of apprenticeship, he may demand his enrolment on the books of the order of Advocates; whereupon, only, can he exercise to the fullest extent his real functions.

But,—and I here enter into the second part of my discourse—what really are the functions of the Lawyer?

### THE LAWYER'S FUNCTIONS.

These may be summarised and characterised in a simple sentence: the lawyer pleads before the tribunals.

I shall not speak, ladies and gentlemen, about the formal pleading which consists in defending the client by the speech, because you understand it in India quite in the same way that

we French people do. And, even more, I may make bold to state that the temperament of the French Advocate bears a great resemblance with that of a Bengali Advocate. His speech is generally as fluent, warm and convincing; and his gesture as easy and expressive. Moreover, in France, as in India, the Advocate's only function is to plead. The writing of the procedure is not entrusted to his care, but to that of officials such as solicitors and attornies.

But, what is the character of the Tribunals before which the French Advocate has to plead? Here, I am bound to give you some idea about the judicial organisations in France.

In a general way, one can say that there is in France, for all cases of a certain importance, two degrees of jurisdiction: of first and of second instance. The Courts of first instance—I shall deal only with the ordinary jurisdictions and leave out of discussion the exceptional tribunals, such as the Justices of the Peace for small affairs, the Commercial Tribunal or Council of experienced men (*Counseils de Prud'-Hommes*) for litigations relating to the contracts between working men and their employers—the Courts of first instance, as I say, consist in the Civil Tribunals of wards (*Tribunaux civils d'arrondissement*) so called because there is one of them in every ward. As concerns the jurisdictions of second instance they consist in the Courts of Appeal (*Course d'Appel*), of which there are 26 in France. The judiciary composing them are more numerous, more experienced, more respectable, and incidentally more sumptuous with their red robes compared to the black worn by judges of the lower tribunals.

But, above the Civil Tribunals and the Courts of appeal, outside the juridical hierarchy altogether, there is one Supreme Jurisdiction quite unique in the whole of France and sitting in Paris, *the Cour de Cassation*. The Court of Cassation is divided into 3 chambers and consists of 45 eminent Judges, who have arrived at the summit of their professional career. The splendour of the Court room and the solemnity of the procedure, not to speak of the magnificent costume of the counsel, impress one as entirely in keeping with its position as the Supreme Court of Judicature in the country.

The functions of this Supreme Court are original and special;



being to examine if the decision of the Civil Tribunals and the Courts of Appeal conform to the established Law, and thereby to maintain the uniformity of judicial interpretations. It does not deal with questions of fact which have been discretionarily adjudicated by the judges of the lower Courts; it only examines the legality of the decisions submitted to it for revision, that is to say, it judges the judgement and not the case. And if it holds that there has been a departure from legal principle or procedure it may set aside the offending decision and, without substituting its own decree, refer the parties to another Court of equal jurisdiction for a retrial.

I should state that the judges composing all the different ordinary jurisdictions,—Civil Tribunals, Courts of Appeal and Court of Cassation,—receive a special education. All are officials of the Government who, in order to be appointed to the Judiciary, must, over and above the academic diploma acquired in the Faculty of Law, pass through a period of probation and ultimately a special examination as a test of judicial capacity.

Moreover, the Judges always sit in benches formed of an odd number of members; 3 in the Civil Tribunal, 5 in the Court of Appeal, 9 in each Chamber of the Court of Cassation. In fact, we are very partial to this bench system; and the efforts made from time to time to introduce the system of trials by single judges, so highly appreciated in other countries, always fail in France. For, we consider that the plurality of judges by itself affords a guarantee of experience, independance and impartiality.

Now that you know our different Courts and their composition, it is easy for me to communicate to you the duties and privileges of the lawyers.

If we leave out the Court of Cassation which, by reason of its high and special function obeys particular rules, and has a special class of advocates who are at the same time solicitors, we can say that all our lawyers have the privilege to plead before all the Courts of first and second instance. Enrolment to the Bar of any city of France entitles a Lawyer to plead before all the Tribunals in France. Moreover, there are no superior or inferior classes of advocates. Under the black robe, all Lawyers carry uniformly the same rights before the Law and the

same privileges in the Bar. Only talent and quality of work bring to them elevation in office and professional renown; and here, indeed, is the extent of their privilege apparent, for in what other sphere of our life, can one fly higher on the wings of Fame than in that of the Law?

Certainly there are in France Professors of the Faculty of Law whose names are imperishable; the students whom they have trained, the learned and important books which they have published, remain for ever as the permanent testimony of their zeal and genius. May I cite in this connection the names of Aubry and Rau, Saleilles, Planiol, Colin and Capitant, Geny and Demogue, in the Civil Law; Laine, Pillet, Weiss and Martin in Private International Law; Thaller, Lyon-Caen, Wahl, Percerou and Ripert, in Commercial Law; Renault, de Lapradelle, Duguit, Hauriou and Berthelemy in Public Law; Garsonnet, Glasson and Tissier in the Civil Procedure; Garcon and Le Poittevin in Criminal Law; Souchon, Gide, Truchy and Perreau in Political Economy; Girard, Cup and Collinet in Roman Law; Esmein and Chenon in the History of Law?

Certainly there are also Judges whose integrity, honour and civic virtues are put forward as examples and whose authoritativeness is attested by their judicious, learned and equitable decisions; decisions which are embodied in our important law-reports. For, Case-law constitutes to-day, even in France, a veritable source of Legislation, always in the process of renewal. In fact Case-law fills up the gaps in our old Codes and incessantly resolves new questions arising out of the transformation of economic and social needs; and that to such an extent that the Lawyers measure their prestige in the Courts by the number of cases which have been decided in their favour; the more such previous decisions there are, the more certain are they of gaining their cause.

But, the science of the Professor, the talent of the Judge, are only sources of a sober glory, radiating a perfume, which though penetrating is subdued and can rarely be felt by ordinary men. A lawyer, on the contrary, is easily crowned with public glory. His name is remembered and repeated with admiration, Berryer, Labori, Rousset, Busson, Billault, Cherm, Foursade

and so many others. Now his advocacy, now and more often, his pleading in a criminal case which gives splendid scope for emotion and eloquence, will assure his reputation. Working by turn on the sentiment of pity and irony, sometimes aggressive and masterful, sometimes sweet and insinuating, some lawyers know how to use the French language as a perfect instrument, seductive as the voice of the Siren. And you remember how the French Academy counts always some lawyers amongst the immortal master-thinkers and master-speakers. Yesterday it was Barboux, to-day it is Barthou, Poincaré, Henri Robert.

Finally, taking one step further, and leaving the strict domain of Law for the neighbouring kingdom of Politics, the Lawyer frequently devotes himself in France to public affairs, to *res publica*. Accustomed to weigh the conflicts of private interest, he is tempted to grapple with the problems of general interest; from conducting litigation, he is predisposed to the conduct of the national affairs; from the defence of individual liberties, he is urged to the vindication of Freedom; from the habit of applying the Law, he passes on to the function of making the Law; that is why, without going further than Gambetta and Thiérs, by whom was laid the foundation of the political regime which governs France for the last 50 years, our politicians are largely recruited from Lawyers.

And if, one day, crossing the vast ocean, you stop for a while under the sky of sweet France, in Paris, and if you pass the portals of the Palais of Justice, the silhouette of which, evoking the memory of the Middle Ages and crowned by the elegant towers of the *Sainte-Chapelle*, has been reflected for centuries in the tranquil waters of the Seine, you can read, engraved on a marble slab, in the Bar Library, the names of Millerand and Poincaré, Presidents of the French Republic and Lawyers at the Court of Appeal of Paris.

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, tell me, was I not justified in placing the Lawyer as a kind of Divinity in the very centre of the juridical life of France?

## SPIRITUAL VALUES IN SOCIAL SERVICE

*(From a Lecture delivered at the Calcutta Social Service Conference).*

By BIPIN CHANDRA PAL.

This conference has already dealt with primary education, popular education, adult education, commercial education, citizenship, untouchability, liquor and drug traffic, the protection of lower animals, and the vital problems of sanitation and medical relief. At its next session will be discussed the important subjects of juvenile offenders, habitual criminals, vigilance and rescue work.

All these are very important subjects, but the one question that arises in my mind is this: "Why should I spend my time in dealing with these matters? What ought to be the inspiration of social service? What ought to be its ideal?" It may be that you want primary education for political purposes. It may be that you want educational reform for economic and industrial improvement. It may be that you want education in citizenship for the same political ends. You may want to remove untouchability out of pity for the condition of the so-called depressed classes. You may try to deal with the liquor and drug traffic from the same missionary motive. But are these the highest motives wherewith to approach these questions?

That question always arises in me when I think of social service. If you ask me "Why are you interested in education, in politics, in economic improvement, or in social reform?" the answer, so far as I am concerned, will be this: "Because I consider that these things are essential for the purification and the uplift, in a word, for the salvation, of my own soul." My social service is absolutely self-regarding from one point of view and, from another, its fundamental basis must be the recognition of the principle of what is now called the "Solidarity of Man."

You cannot attain your own selfish purposes—however narrow your vision, however self-regarding your activities, you cannot possibly attain even these limited interests—without

taking care for the similar attainment of the similar personal interests of your neighbours. You cannot yourself be healthy and have strength and attain longevity by simply trying to keep your own home free from insanitary conditions, because if your neighbour's home allows the germs of disease to grow, they will attack your own home also, however much you may try to keep it clean and sanitary.

If you are educated—whether intellectually or spiritually—you cannot really satisfy your own intellectual or spiritual cravings unless those amongst whom you live are equally educated. Interchange of thought is an essential condition of intellectual self-realization, and unless you have about you men and women who are as thoughtful and reasonable as yourself, your intellectual life will be a failure. Water cannot rise above its own level, and the individual, whether physically or intellectually or morally, can never rise above the general level of the community or the society to which he belongs. This is the fundamental basis of social service.

Your own well-being—I do not ask you to go farther than your own self-interest—depends upon the well-being of your neighbours; your family's well-being depends upon the well-being of the community to which you and your family belong; and your communal well-being entirely depends upon the well-being of the nation, consisting of many communities, of which your community is only one of the limbs or organs. The solidarity of man, or the organic conception of social life and relations, must conform to the fundamental basis of social service. This is the first thing to which I should like to invite your attention.

But this is not all. There are higher reaches of social idealism; there are higher aspects of social service. To you and me and those who believe in the soul, who believe that God made man in His own image and out of His own substance, as the Christian Bible says, and as the Koran also says I think,—and our own scriptures say the same thing,—man is God in the making. That is the fundamental truth of all religions.

Man is God in the making; you have the spirit of God in you, and the fulfilment of the highest object of your life lies in the

development of the latest divinity that is in you; and not only in you, for you cannot develop the divinity in yourself unless you develop the same divinity that is in your brother Man and your sister Woman. Without this you cannot realise God,—and every religion says this is the plinth and the foundation, the sum and substance, of spiritual life, *viz.* : realization of God.

Perpetual God consciousness is the universally accepted ideal of the highest religious and deepest spiritual life. But how can you live in a perpetual consciousness of God unless those who are about you constantly quicken your consciousness of God by their own conduct and their own life and character? Therefore, if you want to make visible the invisible Spirit, if you want to realise the God whom you worship, the only way to do it properly, correctly, really,—and not merely imaginarily,—is to develop the divinity in every man and every woman.

Therefore I want education, because the want of education obstructs the vision of my brother Man; I want the improvement of sanitary conditions because the diseased man, weak in body, suffering from various ailments, does not bring to me the beauty and the grandeur of my Lord. I want the man beautiful, I want the woman beautiful, I want the child beautiful, because the man beautiful, the woman beautiful and the child beautiful reveals to my eyes the eternal beauty of the All Beautiful.

I want enlightened men, enlightened women and even children beaming with the light of God, opening like the petals of a flower. I want intellectual illumination, because, unless those who are about me are intellectually illumined, I cannot realise the eternally illumined Lord in my social surroundings. in the man and the woman about me.

I want men and women to be pure, and by purity I understand that men and women should be established upon their own Being. That thing is pure which exists in its own nature, in its eternal and real nature; and when men and women exist in their own eternal and real nature, which is their spiritual nature, I see in them my God; and that is why, as a help to the worship of my God, I desire this social service.

It is in the revelation of God in humanity that you can serve

your God. You call God your Father. But that has no meaning unless you realise the ideal of the relation between the son and father in your own life. You call God your friend, but it has no meaning unless you realise in your own social relations the purest of friendships. You call God your Lord and Master ; and by all the endearing names. But these names have no meaning unless you realise the Spiritual in and through all family and social relations.

The spiritual value of social service consists, first, in the realisation by the social worker, every moment of his life, in every case that he applies himself to for the uplift of his brother Man, of the fact and the principle and the truth of the solidarity of man. And next, the spiritual value of social service consists in the perpetual realization by the social workers of the presence of the Lord, in the fallen woman, in the vicious, in the criminal, in the unillumined, in the ignorant and even in the poorest of the poor.

When you realise God, when you realise in your innermost soul that through the service of the afflicted you will serve your God, your service is lifted to the spiritual plane. When you serve those who are depressed, when you seek to minister to their wants, not in the spirit of the ordinary missionary or of the philanthropist, not in the spirit of those who come down from a higher pedestal to raise those who are standing on a lower level, but in the spirit of real and devout worship,—when you serve those who are submerged and down-trodden in that spirit, when you realise in the depressed classes the presence of your God, it is then that you will be able to render them true spiritual service.

And so there is a great danger in social service,—the danger of forgetting the ultimate aim, forgetting the spiritual aspect of it ; the great danger of losing sight of the object in our attention to the details of the organisation ; the great danger of ignoring the organism itself in our eagerness to serve the different organs ; and, with a view to fight these dangers, it is essential that you should keep this spiritual ideal prominently before you and judge every department of social work by its spiritual value.

I'VE LOVED THIS WORLD.

*(From the original of Rabindranath).*

I've loved this world's face splendour-girt  
    With all my heart,  
    And I have wound,  
    In fold on fold,  
My life around it and around;  
    The gloom of dusks, the gold  
Of countless dawns across my soul have rolled,  
    And sped and passed;  
    At last  
    My life to-day is one  
With earth and sea and sky, and moon and sun.  
    Thus life hath won my heart,  
For I have loved this world's face splendour-girt.



And yet I know that I shall have to die.

One day my eye

No more the light of day will drink;

In the abyss of void my voice will drop and sink;

My soul no more will fly

To greet the morning's flaming light;

No more will night

Her secrets whisper in my ears;

I'll take my final look on earth and tell

My last farewell,

When Death appears.

As true

Is passion's yearning cry,

So too,

This bleeding parting when we die

And yet some inner harmony must bind the two;

Or the universe, so long,

Would not endure the fraud, the wrong,

So grievous, base,

With smiling face;

And all its light

Would wither like a worm-bit flower in blight.

*Translated by KUNITISH CH. SEN.*

## THE ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF VIKRAMASILÂ

*(From a lecture under the auspices of Patna University).*

By PROF. J. N. SAMADDAR.

The University of Vikramasilâ is associated permanently with the epithet Royal, as it was not only created by a king, but the titles on its scholars were bestowed by kings, also. And if the University of Nâlandâ fulfilled the criterion of Newman that a University is a school of universal learning, implying the assemblage of strangers from all parts in one spot, this royal University of Vikramasilâ also satisfied that condition. And it also came under the definition of Carlyle of being a collection of books, for we know, both from internal and external evidence, that there was a big library, which along with all its other paraphernalia was destroyed by the Muhammadan invaders.

The accounts relating to Vikramasilâ, however, are rather meagre. We have to depend for the details to a large extent on Târânath, the historian of Tibet(1).

Our difficulty in tracing a fuller history of Vikramasilâ is intensified by the fact that Hieun Tsiang, the prince of Chinese travellers, has not given us any account of it, proving that the university had not come into existence, or at any rate, was not of sufficient importance to merit his visit. Neither does the other Chinese traveller, I-Tsing, to whom we are so much indebted for information regarding the curriculum of Nâlandâ, give us any account of Vikramasilâ, showing that the former was in his time still flourishing, while the latter was yet unknown. And the presumption that it had been revived and forsaken, or fallen into decay, before the advent of Hieun Tsiang(2) cannot at all hold good(3).

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(1) For the translation of some passages relating to Vikramasila, I am indebted to Sister Gertrude of the Patna convent.

(2) J. B. T. S., I.

(3) "The inscription on the minor figures in Gupta Character of the third and fourth centuries show that the Vihar with its chief caves and pilasters had been established a considerable period before than time, probably at the beginning of the Christian era, or even earlier." This is altogether an untenable theory. The fact that it was founded by Dharmapala who reigned in the ninth century clearly demolishes it.

Vikramasilâ began to rise after the downfall or decadence of Nâlandâ, and for a time there seems to have been intercourse between the two. Lama Târânath(1) remarks that the Professors of Vikramasilâ watched over the affairs of the Nâlandâ. Though it is difficult to surmise the exact meaning of this, it undoubtedly points to a connection, and further, in later times, we find that while Atisa was proceeding towards Tibet, his interpreter was staying at Nâlandâ(2).

As in the case of Nâlandâ(3) in Vikramasilâ also, we find a tradition telling us about the origin of the university, or rather of the monastery which birth to the university. It is said to have been so named because a *Yaksha* called Vikrama was suppressed here(4). A Tibetan tradition also has it that Acharya Kâmpilya, a learned Professor of the School of Buddhist Tantras, who had attained to *siddhi* (perfection) in the Mahâmudrâ mysticism, was once struck with the features of a bluff hill which stood out on the bank of the Ganges. Observing its peculiar fitness for the site of a Vihar, he remarked that under royal auspices it could be turned into a great place for the use of the *Samgha*. By dint of foreknowledge he also knew that at one time on that hill a great Vihar would be built. In course of time Kâmpilya was born as Dharmapâla the famous Buddhist king of Gauda, and remembering what he had been in his previous birth, he built the monastery and along with it the university. In view of the fact that the first donor was a king, Vikramasilâ was known as the Royal University.

This may be a mere traditional story, but we cannot altogether ignore tradition. And, whatever may be the value of this particular story, it is an admitted fact that the foundations of the monastery were first laid by Dharmapâla in the 9th century. *Paramasaugata Parameshwara Paramabhattacharaka Maharajadhiraja* Dharmapâla is mentioned in the *Khâlimpur Prasasti*, the date of which has been fixed at 910 A.D. It was under his auspices that one hundred and eight Professors taught

(1) German edition, P. 218.

(2) *Indian Pandits in the Land of Snow*.

(3) *Vide* Beal or Walters.

(4) *J. B. T. S.*, Vol. I. 10-11.

in Vikramasilâ(1). In addition to these there were also Achâryas for offering wood and fire and for ordination, as well as three superintendents.

For four centuries the University of Vikramasilâ pursued a successful career, being managed, under royal patronage, by a board of six members presided over by the high priest. To its distinguished alumni(2) it granted the diploma of Pandit, which was conferred by the reigning king.

Among these Pândits may be mentioned Ratna Vajra, an inhabitant of Kâshmîr, who was appointed Gate Keeper, a post of distinction. Similarly Acharya Jetari received his diploma from king Mahipâla and could boast of Dwipankara (Atisa) as his pupil. One of the others, Ratna Kîrti, a Professor at the university, should also be mentioned along with Jñâna-srî Mitra, who was indeed a great pillar of the Vikramasilâ University. Atisa or Dwîpankara himself was indebted to him. Jñâna-srî Mitra was also Gate-keeper and was appointed the head of the University when Atisa left for Tibet. We may also mention the name of Ratnâkara Sânti, who was ordained in the order of the *Sarvâstivâda* School of Odantapuri of which we shall speak later on, and who learnt the Sûtras at Vikramasilâ from Jetâri, Ratnâkara Kîrti and others. Ratnâkara was also made Gate-keeper after which, at the invitation of the king of Ceylon, he visited that island where he gave an impetus to the Buddhist doctrine(3).

Nâlandâ had one gate only, through which all aspirants after university education had to pass, but Vikramasilâ had six gates, over which there were six Gate-keepers or *Dvâra Panditas*, who guarded, as it were, the destinies of the university. According to Târânâth there was Prajñâkâramati at the Southern Gate, Ratnâkara Sânti guarded the Eastern gate, Vâgîsvara Kîrti watched over the destinies of the Western gate, Naropa ruled at the Northern gate, Ratna Vajra was in charge of the

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(1) J. B. T. S., I., Pt. I., p. 11.

(2) S. C. Vidyabhusan's *Logic*, p. 79. It is not known what title the University of Nalanda conferred on the distinguished students. Vidyabhusan suggests that that University also recognised the title of Pandit.

(3) S. C. Vidyabhusan's *Logic*, P. 342.

first central gate and Jñâna-srî Mitra tested students at the second central gate.

Vikramasilâ improved considerably upon Nâlandâ regarding academic organisation, but it was unable to achieve the wide range of influence, nor had it the vast numerical strength, of the latter university. For this, of course, the state of the times was more or less responsible, as the whole country was then suffering from disruption.

King Dharmapâla, its founder, furnished Vikramasilâ with four establishments, each consisting of 27 monks belonging to the four principal sects. He also endowed it with rich grants, fixing regular allowances for the maintenance of the priests and students. Besides, there were establishments for temporary residents(1).

As in the case of Nâlandâ, other kings after Dharmapâla made additions to this university. There was a central hall, called the house of science. It had six gates which opened on six colleges which had one hundred and eight professors. There was also a large open space which could hold an assembly of 8000 persons(2). Each college was under the guidance of a *Dwara Pandita*, the Gate-keeper, of which post we have made mention before.

Just as at Nâlandâ, students desirous of entering the university had to subject themselves to a severe test examination, so here also no one could enter the precincts of this seat of learning without defeating the *Dwara Pandita* in controversial disquisition. The two Pandits who taught theology in the central college were called the first and second pillars of the University.

For the support of the resident pupils of the colleges within the monastery, were *satras* (hostels) where scholars were entertained free and were given their necessities. They were endowed, as we find in the case of Nâlandâ, by the princes and nobles of the country. That this sort of endowment continued from the beginning till the end of the university is proved by

(1) *J. B. T. S.*, 1-10.

(2) "The quadrangle evidently was a large Buddhist Monastery or Vihar such as one time existed at Sarnath, Sanchi, Buddha Gaya and other places of note"—  
Dr. Rajendralal Mitra.

the fact that as late as the tenth century a *satra* was added to the Vihar by one of the sons of king Sanâtan, of Varendra, better known by his name of Jetâri.

Like Nâlandâ, again, the whole university was surrounded by a wall. On its front wall, to the right of the principal entrance, was painted the likeness of Nâgârjuna, and to the left the protrait of Atisa himself. We also find the existence of a Dharmasâlâ on the gate outside the wall, where strangers, arriving after closing time, were given shelter.

The whole establishment must have been a magnificent one and it was, evidently, so nicely adapted to its purpose, both as a religious and an educational institution, that the Tibetans took it as a model for one of their own monasteries.

The courses of study in Vikramasilâ were, perhaps, less comprehensive than those at Nâlandâ. The most important branch of learning taught here seems to have been the Tantras. Vikramasilâ flourished in the days of Tântrikism, when occult sciences and magic had become the favorite subjects of study. In fact, from the 5th century, Buddhism had assumed a new phase, and was already converted into Tântrikism, which developed further between the eight and tenth centuries of the Christian era.

As Dr. Kern, the great authority on Buddhism, has rightly observed(1) "The doctrine of Buddhism in India, from the eighth century downwards, nearly coincides with the growing influence of Tântrikism and sorcery which stand to each other in the relation of theory to practice". The development of Tântrikism is a feature that Buddhism and Hinduism have in common, the idolatrous cult, of "female energies" being grafted upon the theistic system of Mahâyâna and the pantheistic mysticism of Yoga(2).

There was in the monastery a class of Tântrikas known as *Kimsukhas* who brought much trouble on Atisa. Two instances are referred to in *The Journal of the Buddhist Text Society*(3)—the one of Maitri (a Kimsukha) who was charged with certain

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(1) Kern's *Buddhism*, P. 133.

(2) N. N. Vasu *Modern Buddhism*.

(3) Vol. I.

irregularities in matters connected with doctrinal, ritual and other collateral matters on account of which a condemnatory remark was written on the wall at the entrance of the Vihar by a monk called Sânti; and the other, of wine being detected in the possession of one of the monks, which he kept secretly in his room and which he alleged he had brought for presenting to a Buddhist nun whom he intended to consult on certain matters, showing how the religion of Gautama Buddha had deteriorated in the hands of his later followers.

Next to the Tantras, there were studied Grammar, Metaphysics and Logic. This last subject, which was studied assiduously and extensively at the Nâlandâ university, was also cultivated here, and some of the greatest scholars at Vikramasilâ distinguished themselves in this subject. The fact that there were six eminent logicians acting as *Dvâra Panditas* (Gate-keepers) go to prove that Logic was a popular subject(1).

Here also, as at Nâlandâ, the teachers and students occupied themselves with copying manuscripts, and in the British Museum there is a beautiful copy of the *Ashta Sâhasrikâ Prajñâpâramitâ* the colophon of which mentions the fact of its being copied in the reign of *Paramesvara Paramabhatâraka Paramasaugata Mahârajâdhirâja Srîmad Gopaladeva*, who, according to Dr. Barnett was the second Gopaladeva(2).

Sarat Chandra Das in his *Indian Pandits in the Land of Snow*, a book which is unfortunately becoming rare, though published only thirty years ago, has given us a graphic description of a religious assembly at Vikramasilâ(3). The description is by the Tibetan who was sent there to take Atisa back with him for the revival of Buddhism in Tibet :

In the morning at 8 o'clock, when the monks congregated together, being conducted by the Sthavira, I was given a seat in the ranks of the learners. Then first of all the venerable Vidyâ Kokila came to preside over the assembly. His appearance was noble and majestic. He sat exalted and steady like the Sumeru mountain. I asked those near me, if he was not Lord Atisa. "What do you say, oh Tibetan *âyusmat*? This

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(1) S. C. Vidyabhusan's *Logic*.

(2) *J. R. A. S.*, 1910, P. 151.

(3) Corresponding to the modern Convocation.

is the very revered Lama Vidyâ Kokila, who being a lineal disciple of Acharya Chanda Kirti has become a saintly sage. Do not you know that he was the teacher of *Jovo Atisâ*?" Then again pointing to another Acharya who was seated at the head of a row I enquired if he was not Atisa? I was told that was the venerable Narapanta, who for his scholarship in the sacred literature has no equal among the Buddhists. He too was Atisa's tutor.

At this time, when my eyes were roving to find out Atisa, the Raja of Vikramasilâ came and took an exalted seat, but none of the monks, old or young, rose from their seats to mark his arrival. Then another Pandit came, in a grave and solemn mood, moving slowly. Many young *âgyasmats* rose from their seats to receive him with offerings of incense. The Raja also rose from his seat to do him honour. On the Raja's rising up, the monks and the Pandits also got up from their seats respectively. The Lama was seated on a reserved seat. Thinking that, as so much honour was shown to the Lama, he must be some royal monk, or some venerable *sthavira*, or Atisa himself, I wished to know who he was. I was told that he was Vîr Vajra, a stranger whose residence was not known to them. When I interrogated them as to how learned he was, they said that they were not aware of the extent of his attainments.

When all the rows of seats were filled up, there came Jovo Atisa, the Venerable of venerables, in all his glory at whose sight the eyes felt no satiety. His graceful appearance and smiling face struck every one of the assembly. From his waist hung down a bundle of keys. The Indians, Nepalese and Tibetans all looked at him and everyone of them took him for a countryman of their own. There was brightness mixed with simplicity of expression in his face which acted as a magic spell upon those who beheld him.

Such was Atisa who was taken to Tibet by the envoy of the Tibetan king to bring about the renaissance of Buddhism in that country. It was this Atisa who revived the practise of the Mahâyâna doctrine. "He cleared the Buddhism of Tibet of its foreign and heretic elements which had completely tarnished it and restored it to its former purity and splendour. Under his guidance the Lamas of Tibet discovered what is called the real and pure path of the exalted excellence"(1).

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(1) *Indian Pandits in the land of Snow*, P. 76.



It is interesting to note that neither Atisa, nor his activities in Tibet, are mythical. Modern research proves my assertion(1). The *Archaeological Survey Report* says :

The times of Atisa have become known through Das's *Indian Pandits in the land of snow*. But up to the present it has been found impossible to decide whether the persons mentioned in connection with Atisa actually lived or not. In the course of our tour we discovered several inscriptions of those times at Poo, in Spiti and Ladakh. On one of the walls of Tabo monastery of Spiti, we discovered an inscription of the days of king Byang-chub-od of Guge, the very ruler who invited Atisa to Tibet. The principal hall of Tabo monastery called Nam-par-srang-mdzad, seems to have remained unchanged since the days of Atisa(2).

The writer also mentions an inscription which contains the names of the two most important Lamas of the periods *viz.* : Rin-chen bzng-po and Atisa, the latter being called Phul-byung, which is his Tibetan name. The inscription says that Rin-chen was made a "light of wisdom" through the agency of Atisa. This apparently is a reference to the controversy between the two Lamas which ended with Rin-chen's acknowledging Atisa's superiority.

Such was the head of the Vikramasilâ university, with its numerous alumni. But such are the ravages of time that not only have its glories almost totally vanished, but it is even difficult to identify the site now. Cunningham suggested the village of Silao near Borgaon(3). This is out of the question as the Ganges could not have been anywhere near it. Then there was the suggestion of Pandit Satish Chandra Vidyabhusana who tried to indentify it with Sultanganj in Bhagalpore. The hill there, however, is a very small one, too small to have a monastery with six gates and a quadrangle or open space which could hold an assembly of 8000 men, together with the large number of temples and colleges it contained. This identification, therefore, is anything but satisfactory. The Tibetan chronicles mention clearly that the monastery was situated on a

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(1) Historial Documents from the borders of Tibet *A. S. R.* 1909-10

(2) *Vide* also the Foreward to *Rambles in Bihar*.

(3) *A. S. R.*, 1.

bluff hill on the right bank of the river Ganges. The best identification appears to be that by Mr. Nundo Lal De who locates it at Patharghata, which site he describes as follows :

A day's sail below Sultanganj is situated a steep, projecting hill called Patharghata, a spur of Colgong, twenty-four miles to the east of Champanagar, the ancient Champa, the capital of Anga. The rock projections at Patharghata and Colgong form a beautiful curve on the right bank of the Ganges flanked by an amphitheatre of hills, which greatly enhances the picturesqueness of the landscape and heightens its beauty. The river Ganges, the general course of which from Bhagalpore to the ocean is nearly due East, flows northward from Colgong to Patharghata and takes a singular turn round the Patharghat hill, some of the rocks of which project in a promontory into the river, and this projecting portion with a large part of the hill beyond, is properly called Patharghata(1).

This site, suggested by Mr. De, is the most likely one, being situated on a bluff hill, as the Tibetan chronicles say, on the right bank of the Ganges, which further has sufficient space for a congregation of 8000 with many temples and buildings. The monastery was destroyed by Musulman invaders, a point which we will take up after referring to another university, namely that of Odantapuri, which also shared the same fate as that of Vikramasilâ.

S. C. Das(2) expresses the opinion that on account of the foundation of a city in the neighbourhood of Nâlandâ, which became the capital of Magadha under the Pâla kings, and also owing to the great eminence to which the monastery itself arose, the entire province came to be known by the name of Vihar (monastery) and the older name of Magadha was gradually forgotten. This seems to be a mere guess which the author does not support by any reference.

Neither does the late Dr. V. A. Smith(3) cite any authority for his statement that Gopala(4), the first king of the Pala

(1) *J. A. S. B.*, Vol. V., No. 1, P. 7.

(2) *Hindusthan Review*, 1906, P. 190.

(3) *Early History of India*.

(4) Taranath on the contrary says, "Gopala, ruling in the beginning of his life in Bengal, founded in the neighbourhood of Odantapura the Vihar of Nalanda and after he had instituted in both countries many schools of the clergy, he made great sacrifice to the Law". (p.158). This would imply that Nalanda came after Odantapuri, which was not the fact. Taranath in another place (p. 193) observes: "At the time of king Gopala and Devapala, Odantapura Vihar was erected."

dynasty, founded a great monastery at Uddandapura, or Odantapura, as it is sometimes called, this being at any rate the ancient name of the modern town of Bihar. This name has also been used by Târânâth. The Mahomedan historian, Abu Umar Minhaz-uddin 'Usman ibn Siraj-uddin of Juzani, better known as Minhaz, on whom we have to depend for facts relating to the history of northern India of this period, mentions the place as Adwand Bihâr.

We have not much palaeographic evidence about Odantapura, either. There is, however, an inscription made in the second regnal year of king Surapâladeva, of the Pâla dynasty, in which we note the flourishing condition of the Odantapura Vihar. And we have also a second inscription, referring thereto, both having been discovered in 1891, and both being now in Calcutta Museum(1).

According to the Mahomedan historian, Minhaz, Magadha was invaded by Muhammad, son of Bukhtiyar Khiliji, after the eightieth regnal year of Lakshman Sen. As the Lakshman era runs from 1119, 1199 may thus be taken as the year of the destruction of the Buddhist places of learning in Bihar,—Nâlandâ, Odantapuri and Vikramasilâ,—whereby Indian Buddhism received a blow from which it has never been able to recover. A large part of the Buddhist population was forced to leave the country, while the rest thought it expedient to embrace Islam.

Much is attempted to be made, to the discredit of Islam, out of this destruction of monks and monasteries. But two things have to be considered in this connexion. We learn from Târânâth that both in Odantapuri and Vikramasilâ the Magadha king had erected fortresses and installed warriors therein, with whom the monks joined in fighting the invader. Further, as Sir P. C. Roy has pointed out, the Monasteries had degenerated into such hotbeds of corruption that the conquerors felt little compunction in putting the resisting inmates to the sword(2).

Moreover this kind of destructive barbarian irruption was

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(1) Cf. R. D. Banerjee's *History of Bengal*, Vol. I., 198 and also *Bangiya Sahitya Parisat Patrika*, iv. 13 for an inscription where the name is mentioned.

(2) *The History of Hindu Chemistry*, Vol. I.

neither suffered alone by India, nor did Islam itself escape its ravages. As Arnold observes : "there is no event in the History of Islam that for terror and destruction can be compared to the Mongol conquest. Like an avalanche the hosts of Chingiz Khan swept over the cities of Muslim culture and civilisation leaving behind them bare deserts and shapeless ruins where before had stood the stateliest of cities girt about with gardens and fruitful corn land"(1).

Just as Baghdaḍ, the abode of learning, the seat of culture, the eye of the Saracenic world, was ruined for ever, so were Vikramsīlā and Oḍantapuri, the centres of Buddhistic culture. Nor, in spite of the suggestion of authorities like Kern and Waddel that Buddhism in India met with its death at the hands of these barbarian invaders, does their conquest seem to have been the only cause.

Indian Buddhism, at that time, was no longer the Buddhism of Asoka, but had become Tantrikism,—more or less of demonology,—with but little of spiritual regenerating influence left in it. Even in the time of Nāgārjuna who, both by example and precept, taught that Brahmā, Vishnu, Siva, Tārā and other deities, possessed the powers attributed to them by the Brahmanas, Buddhism was gradually leaning towards Orthodox Hinduism which was re-establishing itself.

The Pāla Kings were no doubt Buddhists, and a large number of learned men like Atisa flourished under their patronage. These scholars, however, though professedly belonging to the Tantra cult, in fact rose above it. Nevertheless they could not stop the downward course of Buddhism and of its votaries with whom emancipation had come to be sought more and more through enjoyment of the world.

Another cause was that the Pala kings, though Buddhists, were neither aggressive nor powerful. In Dharmapala's time, a big temple of Vishnu was established at Subbāsthali and a *lingam* was set up at Budhgaya itself. At the time of the Mahomedan conquest the temple at Budhagaya had fallen into the hands of Snātakas and had lost all its wealth, though the

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(1) Arnold : *The Preaching of Islam*, p. 276. Cf. Ameer Ali, *A Short History of the Saracens*, p. 397 and 398.

other monasteries were teeming with it, so much so, that Muhammad Ibn Bakhtyar did not think it even worth while to attack it, showing that religious zeal had nothing to do either with his conquest, or with the destruction which followed.

It is a curious fact that all these three Universities,—Nālandā, Vikramasilā and Odantapuri,—were situated at a distance from the capital or capitals of Magadha. What was the reason, I venture to think that the true answer has been given by the great Rabindranath in his *Tapovana* :

A most wonderful thing that we notice in India is, that here the forest, not the town, is the fountain-head of all its civilisation.

Wherever, in India, its earliest and most wonderful manifestations are noticed, we find that men have not come into such close contact as to be rolled or fused into a compact mass. There, trees and plants, rivers and lakes, had ample opportunity to live in close relationship with men.

In these forests, though there was human society, there was enough of open space, of aloofness ; there was no jostling. Still, this aloofness did not produce inertness in the Indian mind ; rather it rendered it all the brighter. It is the forest that has nurtured the two great ancient ages of India, the Vedic and the Buddhistic.

As did the Vedic Rishis, Lord Buddha also showered his teaching in many woods of India. The royal palace had no room for him, it is the forest that took him into its lap. The current of civilisation that flowed from its forests inundated the whole of India.

## IMPRESSIONS OF KATHIAWAR

*By* L. K. ELMHIRST.

Few countries in the world offer to the student such a wealth of variety of scene, people, and custom as India. No geographical boundaries can be set to these variations and the longer a man lives in touch with the village life of India the more ready he becomes to look upon each individual village as a little storehouse of human interest, as a museum of the past and as a unit which must be dealt with upon its own merits,—not lumped together with the others as the dwelling place of the “masses.”

In one square mile, in one out of the way corner of Bengal, exist three distinct types of village, each with its own language inside the home, each with its own social customs and historical tradition; and so great is the variation, even between villagers of the same language and culture, that the wise student of village problems is rarely willing to generalise at all, and the reformer is still more careful to remove the shoes of his panacea for all ills, before treading upon the holy ground of the Indian village community.

Perhaps the greatest tragedy of modern India is that the eyes and minds of these to whom will come the responsibility of governing their own country are hermetically closed to the facts of their own native land. The history and life of India are locked in her villages and her places of pilgrimage and each village is a volume in itself. Text-book and class-room form a prison out of which, even though his home be in a village, the Indian boy rarely escapes. And yet travel can be so easy in India, camping such a delight, the hospitality of the village so lavish, that undiscovered mines of treasure lie within the grasp of teacher and student who will break down the prison bars and wander forth to learn.

It is hardly fair to attempt anything but a guide-book description of life and scenes in Kathiawar after less than a month's visit spent mostly in the train or the city. Yet each day opened

up new vistas of the past, new problems needing careful handling in the future and new evidence worthy of scholarly research. Specially for one whose main taste lies in carrying on research into the causes of the break-down of rural life, and who is attempting to discover means of prevention, alleviation, or cure, the problems of Kathiawar are of compelling interest.

From the moment of entering the narrow-gauge compartment at Viramgam, conversation with citizens, officials and peasants alike, always opened on the subject of the existing water shortage and of the insufficient rainfall of the last three years. After visiting some six states the impression that a country-wide famine had arisen, of a seriousness and frequency hitherto unknown, was vividly confirmed.

It is now forty-three years since the railway was laid down in Kathiawar. During that time it has paid to cut down and carry off the existing timber, whilst little attempt has been made to conserve or to replant the age-old forests. Whether the existence of large areas of forest actually affects the condensation of atmospheric moisture (and thus the supply of rain measured in inches) has not yet been fully proved. But that forest has a two-fold influence upon the water supply of the area it covers is not in doubt at all. At the same time as it prevents direct evaporation from the soil by forming a barrier against the sun's rays and acting as a cooling layer to the surface of the earth, it holds in place the water that has already fallen and, by adding an annual layer of organic material to the poorest and rockiest soil surface, it enriches the soil for further production.

Once the trees are gone and the goats and cattle have free range, the sun's rays fall direct upon the soil, and the cooling layer of forest growth gives place to an oven-like atmosphere. Moisture is extracted from the surface soil to a depth which interferes seriously with the water supply in shallow wells and, worse still, when the rain does fall it is no longer held by the trees, the leaves, the roots and the organic material, but rushes away carrying the best part of the soil with it, leaving only a barren waste which is good for neither man nor beast and almost impossible to reclaim.

With careful felling and timber removal and with strict enforcement of rules forbidding grazing over newly felled areas, Indian forest can recover with little extra expenditure; but, except for a few areas in Junagrah, in Nawanagar, and in Baroda territory, none of these precautions have been taken.

The states of Bhavnagar and Palitana are somewhat better off than the rest in the matter of soil fertility and trees grow more luxuriantly there than in the upland areas. These last mentioned states seem to have suffered less than the rest from shortage of rainfall during the last twenty years, but scarcity of water during the last six years has become a regular scourge instead of an occasional phenomenon in Rajkot, Limbdi, Wadhwan and the upland states, whilst the wholly deforested coast line state of Porbandar is in very serious difficulties.

Parts of Nawanagar, where a definite policy of forest preservation has been adopted, are less affected. Junagarh, with much of its forest still intact has suffered hardly at all in the last few years. Bhavnagar and Palitana are somewhat short of water this year but were not seriously affected last year.

In the history of rural disintegration it is probably true that, before the coming of the industrial city with its feeder railroads, famines, though perhaps frequent, were less noticed. Forest in itself is something of an insurance and country people can adapt themselves to conditions of scarcity or suffer in silence. But the moment the city grows up in a poor-soil area such as Kathiawar it must grow at the expense of soil fertility and country folk in general, and thereupon the existence of famine is much more loudly registered by the city people who are cut off from their supplies of cheap food and cheap raw materials for their factories.

The destruction of forest immediately cuts down the population of graziers and herdsmen and increases the cost of milk and milk products for the city, just as the setting up of a factory industry in the city, though of immediate benefit to the state revenue, tends to disturb the farming industry in the fields and to send up the price of labour. Here must arise the question as to the advisability of the States stimulating and fostering industries rather than factory production in towns, and building



up a sound and healthy rural life rather than the unsound and unhealthy conditions of the modern city.

It is unusual, however, for the city business man or the State Revenue Department to realise that in the field of nature of farming, foresting and grazing, profits come slowly over a long period of years, in a cycle which may easily be upset by the sudden demand for rapid turnover and quick profits.

The country-side can give sure and large returns over long periods, but money invested therein is in the nature of a long-time investment and profit depends upon a close and reverent co-operation with Nature. Desecration of her shrine never goes unpunished; and though Kathiawar may repent in dust and ashes, of which there is likely to be plenty during the coming years, she will find it exceedingly difficult, and over large areas even impossible, to remedy her past short-sightedness.

There is a growing tendency, too, among rulers and city people to follow the disastrous policy of the West and to put implicit faith in the development of factory and city industry at the expense of the farming and village tradition,—in the exploitation of raw materials and minerals and in the rapid expansion of the country town. This the nature of the soil does not fully justify, and the resulting disintegration of the rural life is thus being hastened on. History shows that the profits of such an alteration of the balance, accrue not to the country, not to the village, nor even to the country town or the State capital, but to the better organised businesses and larger factories of Bombay and Ahmedabad.

The State of Cutch is accused of being retrogressive, of leaving its gold unmined, its forts undeveloped and its country untouched by the railroad. But, for the farmer, the labourer and the herdsman, a silver rupee buys just twice as much of the necessities of life as for the population of Kathiawar across the border. Cutch has sacrificed the possibility of development (too often another word for exploitation) and of immediate profits for the sake of a stable life in her countryside, where the poorest may reap the benefit of their labour.

Most serious of all the problems of Kathiawar is the gradual deterioration of live-stock that is following in the wake of rural

disintegration. No country can have a finer capital than that which lies invested in its livestock, and Kathiawar has good reason to be proud of her inheritance from the past in this respect. Upon her livestock depends that vigour and those manly qualities, as well as those gifts of artistic creation, for which Kathiawar has been so famous in the past. The dual-purpose Gir cow is as fine an animal as there is for milk and draught, and with a little scientific breeding it can give, as the experiment at Junagarh shows, as good results as the pure bred stock of the West.

But good livestock is dependant upon a good supply of fodder and human care. Fodder is becoming conspicuous by its absence as the forests disappear, and as the merchants hold out large profits in the form of rupees to farmers who will devote their whole farm to cotton growing. Cheap labour and animal husbandry are being drawn off into the new mills, mines and factories.

Hitherto there has been ample grazing, and these cows, with the help of two very fine breeds of buffalo, have served to supply the people with an abundance of good milk, of pure ghee and consequently of excellent health. It would be hard to find a healthier, stronger, hardier race than that of the Kathiawar herdsmen and shepherds, nor a more cultured and intelligent farmer peasantry. In addition there are two distinct types of goat, both kept for milk purposes, as well as a fine breed of sheep which gives woollen garments to the populace. Except in Palitana and Bhavnagar, very little attempt has been made to keep pure the original breed of Kathiawar horse, an animal that it would be hard to beat anywhere else in India.

Unfortunately this vast source of living wealth, the finest wealth that any country can boast of, and the bedrock of all rural prosperity, is condemned, apparently for the first time in history, to start upon the same journey of deterioration as the ancient breeds over much of British India have already travelled where the forests and jungle have disappeared and have taken the old grazing grounds with them. Jowar stalks and cotton seed are never likely to provide the strength and vigour that the seasons of plentiful rainfall and unlimited grazing gave in past years.

In Bengal and Bihar, which once had their fine milking goats and cows, the destruction of the grazing and the failure to grow any compensating fodder crop, have completed this process of destruction and decay. Goats are kept for the purpose of manure, and no longer for milk; sheep, not for their wool so much as for their manure; and neither are truly economical. In few other places in India is it still possible to get such pure ghee or such good milk as in Kathiawar, or to find either so liberally supplied at the railway stations. Already, as one State after another opens its factories, its mills, or its quarries, the hardy yeoman and shepherd stock is finding its way to the towns where the increase in money wages attracts, but hardly compensates, for the rise in the price of living, and the attainment of crowded and unhealthy conditions.

The good farmer has a way of treating his live stock like members of his own family. In the coming year the villages of Kathiawar are likely to be filled with mourners as the cattle die, or are sold for the value of their hides and bones. This too the city will hardly understand. There will be famine relief,—let us hope plenty of it. At the same time, the showering of charity upon a rural population, as the Bengal Flood Relief showed, does not really meet the situation and inevitably tends to demoralise a people never before accustomed “to beg from any man”. No State in Kathiawar can afford to omit preventive schemes that may seem expensive at the moment, that will not perhaps give a return for a long period of years, but that will hold in them some sure remedy for rebuilding on a firm basis the economic life of the rural population.

Both Bhavnagar and Palitana and especially the Baroda territory have interesting and well worth-while experiments in reforestation with Babul. There is plenty of room for these, and once the Babul is well established, it may be possible to go ahead with the more expensive establishment of permanent timber. Plots should be set apart straight away, and if no fence is possible, or if the expense is thought prohibitive, the strictest

watch should be kept, and the severest laws passed against grazing goats on those areas.

Each year for ten to fifteen years a new plot should be added, sown and fenced so as to establish a permanent rotation. The return, either in timber over a long period, or in firewood and bark over a shorter time, and in superior grazing once the trees have grown beyond the harmful reach of a goat, is such, that, quite apart from the added value in conservation of soil wealth, the prevention of erosion and the possible improvement of rainfall, the experiment should easily pay its way.

Every practicable step should be taken to see that the farmers and graziers are stimulated and assisted in their business. The granting of credit facilities to farmers, the initiation of different forms of co-operation or the training of the school children on a rural rather than on a city basis,—any one of these may be tried with advantage. Experiments in the feeding and breeding of stock, in the introduction of new crops, in the taking up of waste land and in the use of improved implements should be encouraged all through the countryside.

In spite of the taunts of city friends at such an apparently wasteful expenditure of capital, Mr. Zala's farm close to the city of Bhavnagar is a standing example of what can be done with salt and waste land by the use of common and business acumen. Each year shows an increasing return upon capital invested six year ago, so that, in spite of the pioneer nature of the work, this farm is probably the finest experimental and demonstration farm in all Kathiawar.

Mr. Zala's father was forced by circumstances to take up land which no ordinary cultivator would have dared to touch, and which, like thousands of acres of similar land in Kathiawar, is now left untilled to be slowly eroded and gullied until it is good for nothing. By careful bund construction, not only was the erosion stopped and the land levelled, but the best soil was rapidly collected and deposited on the farm from neighbouring areas in the rainy season. With the help of the Western steel plough which cuts deeper, inverts the soil and buries the weeds and organic growth under the surface, the salt lands were in a few years turned into fertile, crop-producing fields.

Soils vary in Kathiawar. A black cotton soil is most usual, but it would be well worth while trying to find out other profitable crops to replace the soil exhausting cotton, which is grown too extensively and too often to be healthy or safe for the future. It is well to remember that a crop giving the highest immediate return in rupees is not always the most profitable in the long run for the farmer or his live stock, or the soil. As is abundantly illustrated by the rapid erection of mills in Bombay and Ahmedabad, the construction of merchant palaces in those cities, and the 100 per cent. or even 200 per cent. profits in the cotton industry, the farmer only gets a very small percentage of the real worth of his cotton crop over a period of years.

Cash is not always wealth to the farmer at all. Last year the farmers of Wadhan made good money on their cotton crop, but found, when the fodder famine fell upon them, that they could not convert that money into any form which would save their cattle from starvation and keep up the ample supply of milk which is the mainstay of their health. The farmer, in fact, except in his dealings with nature, is at the mercy of the market and the brain of the city man. It is here that the States should study his need and give him every support.

Water shortage is going to be a serious problem for some years to come, and therefore, as in parts of Bengal where the old water-storage tanks have fallen into disrepair, recourse must be had to well boring. In Nawanagar the government experimental farm is apparently entirely out of commission owing to lack of water, yet it is admitted that, over large areas, the farmer with a well can make and is making a fair living where his well-less neighbour is being starved out. Water at a moderate depth is plentiful and therefore justifies liberal State expenditure upon wells, in a State where there are not more than 2.5 wells per square mile.

It will not perhaps be out of place to mention here the experience of a recent visit to Sabarmati, an experience which gives additional weight to the above conclusions. Contact with village life has opened up lines of experiment there which are destined to be of the greatest significance in the rebuilding of rural life in India, and to lend variety to a programme which has

sometimes been criticised as being not too well adapted to the sufferings and troubles of the farmer.

If the apostles of Sabarmati are able to extend to the village their common-sense and profitable method of sanitation; their successful planting of babul; their scientific storage of cow manure, solid and liquid, in pucca pits with roof protection; their care and breeding of pure Gir cattle; as well as the results of their many researches in the field of weaving, spinning, ginning, carding and dyeing, a new day is likely to dawn on their countryside. Their Babul sowings, properly fenced against goats for the first year, have produced, not only fire-wood, but saleable timber within only three years of planting. Their working type of village latrine represents the maximum of profit in garden produce, with the minimum of danger from flies and disease. Not one of their schemes is costly, and few villages in India can afford to neglect them.

To return to Kathiawar, nothing perhaps was so striking as the wealth of beauty and artistic creation which flourishes still in its villages and which seems to spring from the very soil itself,—a wealth of which the dwellers in the cities seem almost unaware.

Cheap stamped patterns from abroad already tend to oust and destroy the *bandni* work for which Kathiawar is justly famous. Each dot in the intricate pattern must be wound and knotted by hand before the cloth is dyed, to obtain the desired effect. This is an industry which needs every encouragement, for no machine-made product can ever compete with the freshness and variety of the actual handmade article. Kathiawar embroidery, whether of dresses, of blankets, of wall and door coverings, or of table cloths, is such that no merchant or prince need ever go outside his State for the decoration of city, home or palace. The sense and love of colour visible in the bodices, the shawls with their unique stamped patterns, and the swinging skirts of the women, flashing in the sun from their bits of inserted glass, shows an artistic tradition of which any nation might be proud.

In the Kathiawar country, no useful article is deprived of the privilege of serving as a thing of beauty as well. The farmer's shoe has its shapely turn of toe and heel with an artistic brass insertion; the four-legged wooden support on which swings the baby's cloth hammock outside the cottage door, is carved with a pattern as significant as that on the wooden stand for the earthenware water-jars, or the wooden frame holding the family grindstone. What other place in India can boast of such brass-bound treasure-chests, or carved babul carts, built to last a hundred years?

Kathiawar is an inexhaustible mine of that artistic expression which, whether conscious or not, tends to make life fuller, happier and so much more liveable. Typical of their attitude is the determination and very successful effort of the founders of the orphanage in Jamnagar to introduce to the children the manufacture of beautiful articles, not so much because of their utility, as of their intrinsic artistic merit. Is it inevitable that this inspired creation should go the same way as the cottage industries and products of all those other countries which have turned from their rural life to the production and use of machine-made articles in the mass?

This is not intended as a tirade against the modern tendency in industry and city growth, but is rather a repetition of our one appeal, which the sight of such incomparable cities as Kathiawar can boast has only intensified, an appeal to build surely and soundly for the future upon a close co-operation of city and countryside, and to develop those industries which will stimulate and enrich the life of the countryside as well as that of the city, rather than ruthlessly break down the one in order to promote the temporary prosperity of the other.

Kathiawar is blessed with cities each of which has a real individuality of its own, whether in its walls, its temples or its ancient palaces. What ocean port can compare with Porbandar for instance, with her incomparable sea front, her magnificent building stone, and her

Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam ;  
There is Palitana, the city of shrines and dharamsalas, overshadowed by its temple-crowned hill ; and Limbdi with its river

bed and city lake. But it is unfair to draw distinctions, for each State and each Capital has its own peculiar and individual attraction.

Apart from their care for domestic animals, the attitude of Kathiawar is marked by a certain chivalry towards wild animals and birds. In spite of their occasional ravages on the crops, brilliant peacocks innumerable stroll undisturbed through field and village. Where else in the world is there a sanctum for wild animals like the natural park which borders, at Bhavnagar, on the walls of the city itself,—a jungle of grass and babul trees, in area six square miles, where no goats or cows are pastured, and where no life is ever taken,—unfenced and open to the country on three sides yet affording such cover that in the cool of the evening the *nilgai*, the wild boar, the *chinkar* and the black-buck leave their thickets to stroll with the citizens of the neighbouring town in quiet and peace.

Much of the old, much that was spontaneous and beautiful, with perhaps much that led to a somewhat more precarious existence, has gone with the changing times. The fine old vegetable dyes have gone and the aniline dyes from Europe have come to stay. Only here and there survive the paintings which once covered the walls of almost every house. Few are able to read the old Sanskrit manuscripts which can still be run to earth in city and village.

But, at least, some of the old music survives in the villages and finds its way now and then into the cities too,—not the classical singing and playing which, no longer finding royal support, scarcely keeps alive, but the music of the people,—the *Bhajan*. This is truly a family entertainment. Father, mother, brothers, sisters-in-law and children, yes, and even grandmother too, combining, after the day's toil is over, to form the merry party.

*Tamburá* and *éktará* open with a simple air, the leader introduces the theme, seconds and thirds take it up, *báñyá* and *tablá* add their volume, and the chorus of *manjirá* players joins in, every member not already busy with some other instrument striking his or her brazen discs together until the resonant bell-



like sound of the pairs of ringing hands joins with the full voiced choir, drums, stringed instruments and *kartál* all helping to raise the roof, or rather the stars, and to make the welkin ring.

As verse follows verse the leader will hand over the *tamburá*, snatch a pair of *manjirás* himself, and whirling them round his head perform every kind of acrobatic feat in time to the general melody; or two men with feet interlocked will engage in a mock struggle never ceasing to clap their *manjirás* as the story progresses. One woman, motionless except for the gentle stir and swing of arms, will snap her *manjirás* together as it were dreaming in a world of her own, while another will perform lightning feats with arm and hand, untwining the cotton cords from her fingers and swinging her *manjirás* as the shepherds do their slings, yet always catching the two together on the beat.

For a time the whole family is transformed into an uproarious company intent apparently upon producing the utmost volume of noise. Yet such is the wonderful combination of string, and bow, of tightened drum, of voice, of bell and of clashing cymbals that the outstanding effect produced is of some sudden transportation to a land beyond, where simple folk have achieved their own Paradise and learnt how to extract the last essence of enjoyment from every-day existence.

Impressions? No. For, as one speeds back to the realm of business, politics and newspapers, there arises the memory of some fairyland, some other world; of feasts of colour and scund and beauty; of far horizons and jagged peaks; of a beating surf and of those fairy boats that for centuries have sailed out of Arabia and Arabian Nights laden with pearls and dates and spices; but above all of friendship, of a quiet kindliness and of an abundant hospitality.

# EDUCATION AND RECONSTRUCTION

*A Review.\**

*By* PROF. PATRICK GEDDES.

One of the most suggestive books that lately have come to my hand is V. Branford's "Science and Sanctity." It has truly helped us in our own cause, for its spirit is in harmony with the idea we are trying to develop in Visva-bharati.

Our endeavour, as we have often declared, is to resist the encroachment of the Machine upon life's own fruitful realm, of organised greed into the sanctuary of human relationship. And as we read on through the introduction of this book it gave us courage to realise that individuals in different parts of the world are already busy barricading with their thoughts and dreams the progress of this Monster of the dead soul.

They are but few who genuinely believe in the spiritual meaning of existence; the malignant power of a gluttonous politics and insensate money-making is overwhelming against them and therefore they constantly need mutual sympathy and support. This is why we are grateful to Professor Patrick Geddes for introducing to the readers of this journal the book which is the subject of the following review from his pen.

**Rabindranath Tagore.**

Only too painfully familiar is that prevalent Indian estimate of "the West"—one perhaps not without too much justification—as hopelessly commercialised, mechanised and materialised, as imperialised, militarised, bureaucratised, and so on. Never have I had this view more clearly stated, yet also answered, than by the Indian students in Edinburgh who had played in our Masque of Learning. Said one of their two leading speakers: "It was very gratifying to us to feel our scenes of Indian history and culture appreciated by great western audiences!" "Yes", added the other, "and the European scenes were also very

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\*Science and Sanctity by V. Branford, Williams and Norgate, London, 1923.

interesting to us, since enabling us to realise more than we had ever done before, that here in the West you also have a tradition of culture, and are not so exclusively mechanical, military and monetary, as we had supposed”.

Thus “the West” for most Indian writers and critics, is essentially represented by its Industrial Revolution of the last century and a half, through which we are plunging still; America now leading, Britain second, and other countries following, India largely also—Bombay, for instance, repeating and accelerating the crude British developments of the past century; as well as Calcutta and the rest.

Yet while America and Britain, and other Western countries likewise, will for a time go on furnishing awful examples to India, readily followed here as all over the Eastern world, it may also be that in this very West, while thus mis-leading others, we are also finding for ourselves the way through, out of, and beyond our Industrial Inferno, and to better things.

Only the other day, in New York, the group of old friends and new, who were giving me a “send off” before sailing, asked me the invariable American question: to give them candidly my impressions of America. I answered candidly indeed:

“I may describe these in terms of your wonderful Museum of National History, unique in the world for its collection of giant reptiles of the secondary rocks—Dinosaurs without number, up to twenty feet high and eighty or a hundred long, the most formidable monsters Nature has ever brought forth. Yet, about the same time, there was arising a new type of creature, with a new mode of life, characterised by mothering their young, rather than by devouring each other; but which were then so weak and small that they could but dive into their holes when the monsters came by. This is my impression of America again to-day. Monster Mechanosaurs, Mammonosaurs, Millionosaurs, seem to possess the land; while you, the Americans of a new post-mechanical age, and no longer of the pecuniary culture, are small and insignificant among their huge feet, or prey to their huge jaws. Yet fear nothing. Soon now they will be, like the great reptiles, dead and fossilised, and you, like the mammals,

will have your turn, and possess the earth which they tyrannise to-day."

So far, then, by way of independent introduction towards appreciating this very remarkable new book of Victor Branford's, the ripest utterance of that veteran sociologist,—forty years ago the writer's pupil, since life-long friend and collaborator, and now surpassing him. For here is not only the best of pleas for sociology in general, since Herbert Spencer's admirable little "Study of Sociology", but also the clearest statement of that school of social thought which a few of us are seeking to form and spread here in the East as well as in the West.

Particularly interesting should be this book in Santiniketan and Sriniketan, of all places in India; for here is the idealistic attitude so characteristic of the one, the practical reconstructive endeavour of the other. Their purpose of harmony is surely clear, from whichever end of the connecting road one looks: yet even those to whom it is clearest, will be helped by our author's presentment from his own standpoint. For, though remote from India has been his experience, the spirit of meditation in "the cloister", and that of action in the village, the town, the city, are here organically united into one. And not simply as fact and act, but more deeply, as dream and deed,—in which the peasant not only works as of old, for the religious, the philosopher, the poet, but is also inspired by each anew, and to a fresh reconstruction of his life, of which the green leaves again bear flower and fruit.

Such vital reconstruction then, alike of place, of work, of people, is here presented, and more clearly than by any previous writer,—since now definitely and coherently in terms of the higher sciences, those of life and mind, of society and morals. And all these raised to the ideals of life; as these have been discerned of old, and are again being discerned anew here in India by its Poet, turning to his new inspiration of education and of reconstruction; yet also there in London, by its most practical and experienced of sociologists, who has risen beyond the lower sciences and their affairs, to the spiritual transformation of all these and towards a new and better order of society, a new

phase of human progress, post-mechanical, post-financial, post-imperial; because vital and social, regional and civic. In short here is spiritual renewal, inspiring material reconstruction.

In other words, the theme of this life-freshing book is the incipient Vital Revolution, in its deliverance from that tendency of the Mechanical Revolution, of which the great War was the nemesis. The present after-war is thus seen as the arena of this conflict, in which the older system is still only too active, yet in which the newer is waxing not only determined, but clear, towards victory, and this not necessarily too far distant.

Said a wise old pope in his ninetieth year of troubled times; "I have seen three generations of men, and one thing I can tell you of them: they were each characterised by a very different manner of thinking." This new manner of thinking, prepared in the generation past, for the generation now opening, is here in this book more definitely and coherently expressed than heretofore in the separate schools of religion or philosophy, of science art or literature—though all are now showing signs, and even giving worthy expressions of it. For here, for the first time so clearly, all these varied lines of progress are presented together.

Recall the main history of the West. See the growth, development, and decline of Greek and Roman cultures, and next their barbarian overthrow, followed by Christian renewal, so that the Dark Ages flower into the Middle Ages. See, too, how these again give place to the Renaissance, with the Reformation and Counter-reformation: yet how all again decline. See next the Mechanical and Industrial Revolution, now in our time achieving its very climax of magnitude of war, disorder, and human deterioration.

What next? In these pages we have a coherent presentment,—and, as already said, the fullest and clearest so far, preliminary though it yet necessarily must be,—of the New Age; that of the spiritual life, of love, truth and beauty, and thus religious, scientific and philosophical, and also creative in poetry and art.

This many-sided incipient renewal is co-ordinating the higher sciences of life, the organic and social, and subordinating the physical sciences, hitherto dominant, yet now seen as but of life's environment, not life itself. Hence, as each age makes its own material embodiment, so may, even must and does, a fresh embodiment begin to appear anew, in the renewals even now manifest at many points in every country, however undiscerned by its press and politicians of the old order as they essentially remain.

For in this book of vision—and re-vision accordingly, in every sense—not only are many of the past and present movements of the world freshly interpreted, analysed and criticised, but a opening re-synthesis is more than foreshadowed, often even boldly and clearly outlined. Thus the dis-specialisms of the modern University and its schools are here presented anew, as the potential conspecialisms of their opening future. Our author's salient instance is that of the common-sense unity everywhere observable in our social surveys, around our doors, and of our village, our town, our region. Place, work and people are thus united, in such Regional and Civic Survey, into a living and social unity, instead of dismembered arts and dis-specialised sciences.

Witness our dry "Geography" with its maps of places, a still drier "Political Economy" of futile abstractions,—at their concretest a Mythology of the Market,—in which machine-gods and mammon-gods, in perpetual "Competition", leave us next to that other deadeast and falsest of all pseudo-sciences, that would-be "Anthropology" of national prides, based essentially on breadth and length measurements of whole pyramids of skulls. Yet here these three desiccated studies are shown as roused to life, as the three subsiences of a living sociology—of the place, the work, and the folk, in their living and working unity in every village and town.

Next psychology is brought to bear upon these: but no longer that of its arid text-books, dissociated from real life. Here we watch the mind transforming our outward sense to

outward imagery; and this taking form, not only with poet and painter, but even in the design of a better and more beautiful order for place, work and people themselves.

Yet for this dream of a real Eutopia—which shall make the best of things here as we find them, and thus be no longer among the “mere Utopias” of dream—we need a corresponding intellectual renewal. In this, along with the revival of the imaginative life, comes the renewal of that of thought, extricating from all experiences their essential ideas, and thus arousing the University anew, and towards its prime task, of bringing method and order and unity among all the multifarious and discordant specialisms of its past and present.

Thus the modern University, with its studies as little better than an *Encyclopaedia Alphabetica*,—since but *Analytica*, and therefore *Dis-specialistica*, and so in practical result *Chaotica*,—is shown as capable of advance towards the *Encyclopaedia Synthetica* which is and has been the ideal of philosophy in all lands and ages.

What then is this method, what is this principle of renewal and unification, for knowledge, and for education? No longer any one of the many abstractions on which historic systems of philosophy are based, but the conceptions of Life; and in its unity, Life organic and mental, social and moral. How this life-unity is worked out must be left to readers of this book to seek out for themselves; but in this brief summary of its essential contents, one must not fail of its highest element,—that it expresses from title to conclusion,—nothing short of the renewal of religion. This indeed as in the spirit; and as the pervading essence, and creative unity, of life in evolution.

The founder of Sociology, Auguste Comte, a hundred years ago, who to conventional readers—that is to say mis-readers—has been taken (mis-taken) for an iconoclast of religion, has no more characteristic saying than that “man is ever growing more religious.” And for this hard saying, as it seems in this age of dogmatic faiths attacked by critical science, the reader will not readily find better evidence than in this book.

Yet let us end as we began and even more clearly, by describing it as the completest of guide-books, hitherto, for the road between Santiniketan and Sriniketan. That is between the first as a "cloister" of renewing thought of all kinds,—and in unifying endeavour towards what may well become one of the truest Universities of the opening future,—and the corresponding reconstructive endeavours, in whose widening work place after place shall renew to beauty, its work to happy productivity, and its folk towards their individual and social best. Each place may thus more progressively "work" its folk, as its folk discern and learn more fully to work their place—in sympathy, and thus in polity, united as Ekho-polity; and this with synthesis of science and experience, and thus healthful and productive synergy; and all with visioned clearness towards true and beautiful achievement, that of reconstruction, alike of the world without and the world within.

In conclusion then, since the recent writer is privileged to help with the planning of Visva-bharati, the new University, he ventures to invite all interested in contributing their part—be this great or small—to its life and efficiency, to read this book, difficult, since strange, as it may at first seem, and see if it be not, on one side, a vital contribution to education, that of self as well as of others; and also if it be not, so far, the clearest of western expressions of that very spirit of actual concrete, practical planning from University and school to region and village, town and city; and thus of encouragement and suggestion to these—the conjoined tasks of Santiniketan and Sriniketan.



**WORLD-MOTHER.***(From the Sanskrit).*

By MOHINIMOHAN CHATTERJEE.

Plenitude of Godhead, World-mother,  
 Formless, all-formed,  
 Limitless, portionless, destroyer of  
 Diversity,  
 Salutation on salutation unto Thee.

Creatrix of name and form,  
 Thyself without form and name,  
 Self-radiant, by speech unspoken,  
 Beautifier of the void,  
 Salutation on salutation unto Thee.

As Thine own work art Thou form'd,  
 Thou, Mother of the Universe,  
 Formless as the cause art Thou,  
 Our Father seen and yet unseen.  
 Salutation on salutation unto Thee.

Casting aside corporeal thought,  
 Thou art impartite Bliss,  
 For Thee, within without are naught,  
 Alone, only, one art Thou,  
 Salutation on salutation unto Thee.

Mother of all, may Thy children,  
 Freed of the brute in heart,  
 See all in God and God in all,  
 Thou, Father, Lord, Spirit pure,  
 Salutation on salutation unto Thee.

## NOTES

### THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF SRINIKETAN

(*The Visva-bharati Department of Rural Reconstruction.*)

#### President's Opening Address.

The ideal which is in the heart of the spiritual endeavour in India is *mukti*, freedom. On the occasion of the anniversary of Sriniketan I take this opportunity to explain it.

The meditation text which was given to me when I was a boy is composed of three different sentences from three Upanishads. It has been the guiding light in my own spiritual path towards the attainment of inner freedom. At first it was only for recitation and its meaning was merely philological. With the growth and experience of life its deeper significance is being gradually unfolded to me.

The text is : **Satyam Jnanam Anantam Brahma, Anandarupamamritam Yadvibhati; Shantam Shivam Advaitam.** *Brahma is Truth, He is Wisdom, He is infinite ; He is revealed in deathless forms of Joy; He is peaceful, good; He is one.*

We are born with the consciousness of one truth which for us is the background of our knowledge of all truths. It is the truth about *myself* which consists of an inner reality having its outer manifestations. The manifestations can be proved and measured, but not the inner reality which gives them their unity. There have been some according to whom the diverse facts of the movements of *myself* are all that is real, and not the truth in me which is one. But for me, it does not require any help from logic for realising the *satyam*, for proving the *One* which comprehends all the facts of my life and transcends them.

By the indwelling light of this truth I know that the world to which I belong, and which consists of endless series of movements, has its Truth which is one, and which gives reality to the innumerable facts of the universe. When we realise this

Truth we have our joy, for in it we find the eternal harmony of our own reality.

In a number of cases we ignore the truth of a man and only deal with the facts about him. The man who sells his things to me is a mere fact for myself, the man whom I employ as my servant is a bundle of certain facts which are useful for particular facts of my own life. *Through* them I find some satisfaction of my needs, but I find no joy *in* them. For joy comes to us only when we realise the harmony of *satyam* (truth) in us, with the *satyam* in others. This happens with regard to those we love in whom we are directly aware of the fundamental truth which is being constantly manifested in their life, and thus realise our spiritual affinity. Their outer activities may not be valuable for our life purposes, nay even be a hindrance. They, however, have their ultimate value for us in that they *are*, that they are the embodiment of a truth which is also within me.

It is open to us to treat this world as though consisting of facts not related to a truth having affinity with the truth we carry in our own personality. In that case we may still make use of it and thereby even grow rich and powerful; but therein we find no fulfilment of our spirit. In such relationship we do not realise that freedom which gives us joy. For, our true freedom is not in the negation of bonds, but in the truth of that relationship wherein we have not to abide as aliens. In the region of Nature we take our part in a perpetual tug of war with all else,—the struggle for existence; in the realm of Spirit we realise our sympathy of kinship with the Supreme whom we meet where we are one. In that union is truth, for Brahna is *Satyam* (Truth); in that union is *mukti* (freedom).

The Truth in us not only *is*, but it *knows*. Therefore it has its manifestation of outer movements, its conscious unity of purpose. In the light of this we realise that the *satyam* which is revealed in this universe is also *Jñānam*; it is the eternal reality of knowledge. We would not know anything if the knowing were not there in all that is and happens, if the world-movements were not related in a rational co-ordination of wisdom. We can thus only have our freedom when in our

relationships we have wisdom. For this we have to extend our knowledge, widen our experience and control our self-seeking impulses. As *jñānam* (wisdom) is the attribute of Brahma, the supreme truth, we realise it in our relationships where they express the disinterested greatness of the eternal. Thereby we reach our freedom.

Finally, the truth in us not only *is* and *knows*, but it finds its joy in expressing itself, in giving itself out. Our true expression comes from the consciousness of our abundance. Our self is the limitation we carry in and about us.

If this self were absolutely real by itself then it would be the height of folly on our part to curtail it in any way. But as a matter of experience we find that the expression of all our highest delights seeks some form of the giving up of self; in fact the degree of our realisation of truth is gauged by the degree of our self renunciation. Our knowledge creates its great concepts of science and philosophy, not through the compulsion of immediate needs, but through the joy of its fulness. Therefore we see that seekers of truth in all its departments are so often forgetful of their material self-interest. The cavemen of the prehistoric age, in ornamenting the stone walls of their dwellings with pictures of animals, must have spent a great deal of their time and energy which could have been more practically employed in hunting those animals.

Whatever work we do, urged by the needs of our self, may be constructive, but not creative. When a man of genius produces his works primarily for the purpose of expressing some ideal of perfection, be it in forms, in ideas, or in service, he gives expression to his consciousness of the infinite. Hence we realise from our own inner experience that Brahma is not only *Satyam* and *Jñānam*, but He is *Anantam* (infinite) otherwise all our endeavours in the higher region of creative work and life, of love and self sacrifice, would lose their basis of reality.

The next part of our text is *Anandarūpamamritam Yadvibhāti*, —*Brahma reveals himself in deathless forms of joy*. Our own best creations also have this deathless form of joy, because they

are the outcome of the joy which accompanies our consciousness of the perfect.

The concluding part of our text is: **Shantam, Shivam, Advaitam**,—*He is the Peaceful, the Good, the One*. The Supreme Being, who is *satyam, jñānam, anantam Brahma* in his manifestation, assumes three aspects which run parallel to his three attributes.

In the region of existence Peace comes out of that harmony which is maintained by law and order. In the human world this law and order gives us the outward freedom needed for the external process of our daily existence.

In the higher realm of *Jñānam*, the ideal of perfection is in the inner harmony of conscious relationship, its character is goodness. In law we find the freedom of peace in the external world of existence, in goodness we find our freedom in the world of social relationship. Such freedom is possible, because supreme Truth is *shāntam, shivam*.

Brahma is also *Advaitam*, He is one. This we know when we realise the highest freedom of spirit in our union of love.

[Freedom proves itself truly when it can afford to accept bondage, when its activities are no burden, its responsibilities are joyful. The activities of the world are beautiful because there is the peace of law in its heart, through which it finds its rhythm,—the rhythm, the balance which is the external aspect of freedom.]

[In all revelation of genuine goodness in human society there is that grace which gives responsibility its dignity and sweetness; in such grace our activities find their freedom. In love an infinite deal of troubles lose their pressure and we willingly bear their burden to prove the freedom that our spirit realises when it finds itself united to others across the limits of self.] This is possible because Brahma is *advaitam*, is One.

As individuals, each of us has the unity of a living organism, distinct in himself. As social beings we are parts of a complex organism called humanity. As spiritual being we belong to a Reality which is *ānandam* (joy) which is love, which is all-comprehensive.

The individual living organism has its need and its faculties for self-preservation. In the education of man there should be room for training him for the perfect maintenance of his individual life. Otherwise not only does he become helpless but the faculties atrophy that are for his self-preservation, the exercise of which gives him the true enjoyment of life. Generally speaking, in our education this training of how to live our physical life is neglected; therefore we miss the *Shāntam* (the peaceful) in the self-reliant freedom of a well organised existence.

The adjustment of our individual with our social life, and these with the vast life of man, needs for its training the spirit of mutual responsibility. In our educational institutions this hardly finds its place. The discipline of self control and good behaviour is no doubt recognised, but the service of society requires information, experience and the exercise of a number of physical, moral and intellectual faculties. The result of such deficiency in our education we find everywhere in our surroundings in the form of poverty, disease, ignorance, feebleness of intellect and will, and also in that aggressive spirit of egotism and self assertion, associated with the cultivation of sectarianism, institutionalism and nationalism, that creates in the human world the worst form of dissension and spiritual blindness. Owing to this lack of training in sympathy, man suffers from that lack of true freedom in his social life which comes from a general welfare with a widespread atmosphere of mutual sympathy and co-operation.

I have said before that the world viewed as a mere external fact does not delight us; that unless we know that it has a fullness of reality for its background and foundation, our relation with it becomes merely utilitarian. When the conscious of our own spiritual being does not find its harmony in the universe it loses faith in itself and urges us to put all our resources into the pursuit of self-interest. Ordinarily our education does nothing to train our mind for realising our spiritual relationship with the supreme Truth. For want of this training we fail to develop the spirit of detachment which gives us that large atmosphere wherein our inner being finds its dwelling, and space and leisure for its fulfilment in creation. Our creations of science,

philosophy, art and literature can have their fulness of growth only under this sky of detachment.

It is sometimes objected that such creations are mere abstractions. That may be so. But Music is none the less valuable because of the fact that it is not the voice of concrete life. It grows apart from life's noises in its own disinterested realm of delight. By reason of that abstraction, that aloofness, it acquires the power to enrich life. Owing to its distance and freedom the vapour that forms clouds can send its rain back to earth, making its air sweet and soil fertile. Our knowledge, feelings and experience, at one stage of their progress, are abstracted from life, transported into the bosom of the eternal, and, there purged of all that is non-essential, sent back to life with the velocity of new impact needed for the rousing of latent forces. The minds of those, who in the pursuit of immediate needs constantly cling close to the soil of life, grow dull. Mind in order to discover its freedom of outlook must soar into the upper air of abstraction, swim in the very heart of the infinite for the mere joy of it, and then come back to its world nest.

In all great civilisations there is the cycle of sending up the adventurous mind into the upper and wider space and then bringing it down back to solid ground. The solid earth is suffocated to death if it loses its atmosphere, indefinite and unsubstantial though it be, through which it must have its communication with air and light. So also must the human world have its atmosphere of detachment, which never has for its immediate object the production of necessities, but the function of giving life to the creations that express the unlimited in man in the province of his thought, emotion and will.

Our ideal should be to make ample provision in our bringing up for the development of our spiritual relationship with the Supreme Being which gives us freedom in all departments of life knowing full well that life divested of its consciousness of the infinite breeds only slavery in diverse forms under the appearance of liberty. Allow me to quote in this connection what I have said elsewhere while discussing my plan of an ideal Educational Institution:

The one abiding ideal in the religious life of India has been *Mukti*, the deliverance of man's soul from the grip of self, its communion with the Infinite Soul through its union in *ānanda* with the universe. This religion of spiritual harmony is not a theological doctrine to be taught, as a subject in the class, for half an hour each day. It is the spiritual truth and beauty of our attitude towards our surroundings, our conscious relationship with the Infinite, and the lasting power of the Eternal in the passing moments of our life. Such a religious idea can only be made possible by making provision for students to live in infinite touch with nature, daily to grow in an atmosphere of service offered to all creatures, tending trees, feeding birds and animals, learning to feel the immense mystery of the soil and water and air.

Along with this, there should be some common sharing of life with the tillers of the soil and the humble workers in the neighbouring villages; studying their crafts, inviting them to the feasts, joining them in works of co-operation for communal welfare; and in our intercourse we should be guided, not by moral maxims or the condescension of social superiority, but by natural sympathy of life for life, and by the sheer necessity of love's sacrifice for its own sake. In such an atmosphere students would learn to understand that humanity is a divine harp of many strings, waiting for its one grand music. Those who realise this unity are made ready for the pilgrimage through the night of suffering, and along the path of sacrifice, to the great meeting of Man in the future, for which the call comes to us across the darkness.

Life, in such a centre, should be simple and clean. We should never believe that simplicity of life might make us unsuited to the requirements of the society of our time. It is the simplicity of the tuning-fork, which is needed all the more because of the intricacy of strings in the instrument. In the morning of our career our nature needs the pure and the perfect note of a spiritual ideal in order to fit us for the complications of our later years.

In other words, this institution should be a perpetual creation by the co-operative enthusiasm of teachers and students growing with the growth of their soul; a world in itself, self-sustaining, independent, rich with ever-renewing life, radiating life across space and time, attracting and maintaining round it a planetary system of dependent bodies. Its aim should lie in imparting life-breath to the complete man, who is intellectual as well as economic, bound by social bonds, but aspiring towards spiritual freedom and final perfection.



### The Ceremony.

The following Vedic *mantrams* were uttered (in translation) by the Director and the Heads of Sections, and the responses made by the staff and students, assembled on a stadium decorated with *alponas*, the villagers and guests gathered around.

- Leader : **Yathá dyauscha prithivícha na vibíto na rishyatah,  
Evá me prána má vibheh.**
- Response : **Like Heaven and Earth that neither fear nor are injured,  
my life, never fear !**
- Response : **Má vibheh, Never fear !**
- Leader : **Yatháhascha rátricha na vibíto na rishyatah,  
Evá me prána má vibheh.**
- Leader : **Like day and night that neither fear nor are injured, my  
life, never fear !**
- Response : **Mávibheh, never fear !**
- Leader : **Yathá bhútam cha bhavyam cha na vibíto na rishyatah,  
Evá me prána má vibheh.**
- Like the time past and the time to come that neither fear  
nor are injured, my life, never fear !**
- Response : **Má vibheh, never fear !**
- Leader : **Imá yá pañcha pradisho mánavih pañcha krishtayah,  
Vrishte shápam nadiriveha sphátim samávahán.**
- Like a river after a shower carrying its flood, may all races  
and quarters of the sky carry their fulness.**
- Response : **Sphátimihasumávahán, May all races carry their fulness !**
- Leader : **Udutsam shatadháram sahasradhāramakshitam,  
Evásmákedam dhányam sahasradhāramakshitam.**
- Like a fountain that is never exhausted in a hundred, nay  
even in a thousand streams, may our store of grain never  
be exhausted in a thousand outpourings !**
- Response : **Astu sahasradhāramakshitam, May our stores never be  
exhausted in a thousand outpourings !**
- Leader : **Sam sam sravantu pashavah samashvāh samupurushāh,  
Sam dhanyasya yá sphátih samsravyna hāvisha juhomi.**
- Hither may all creatures come, horses and men in a united  
stream ; here let the plenty that is of the harvest be heaped.**

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\*These were called *Sámmanasya-Mantra*, *mantrams* of the Unity of Spirit.

Response : **Samsravyyena havishá juhomi**, We offer this : this the invocation of union.

Response : **Samvo manámsi samvratá samákútirnamámasi,**  
**Amí ye vivratásthana tán vah samnamayámasi.**  
 Ye who are distracted, may we incline you towards one mind, one cause, one aspiration.

Response : **Sámmanasyam sadástunah**, Incline us towards one mind one cause, one aspiration.

Leader : **Aham gribhámi manasa manámsi**  
**reta, mamachittamanuchittebhi**

**Iledasáttha na paragamátheryo gopoh pushtapatirva ájat.**

May I gain your minds with my mind ; come to my heart with the fellowship of hearts. May you dwell here together never falling asunder. Let a mighty leader, a lord of nourishment, gather you here together.

Response : **Iryo gopoh pushtapatirna ájat**, Let some mighty leader, some lord of nourishment, gather you here together.

Leader : **Sahridayam Sámmanasyamavidvésham kṛinomi vah,**  
**Anyo anyam abhiharyata vatsam játamivághnya.**

May you through me become gracious and friendly to each other, free from mutual hatred. Serve each other even as the cow serves her new born calf with care.

Response : **Anyo anyam abhiharyámah**, Let us serve each other even as the cow serves her new born calf with care.

**Ma bhratá bhrátaram dvikshan ma svasáramutasvasá,**  
**Samyanchah savratá bhútvá vácham vadata bhadrayá.**

May brothers never hate brothers, nor sisters hate sisters. May you possess a kindred spirit and a common cause. Speak words with good will.

Response : **Vácham vadema bhadrayá**, May we possess a kindred spirit and common cause. May we speak words with good will.

Leader : **Sadhrinán vah samanashkrinomi ekashnushtin**

**samvnanena sarván,**

**Devá ivámrítam rakshamánáh sáyamprátah**

**saumanaso vo astu.**

May I, with the feeling of friendliness, help you to become comrades united in mind and in enjoyment. Be like gods who day and night protect their draught of Ever-lasting

Life. Let your love be like their love.

Response : **Saumanaso no astu, Let our love be like their love.**

Leader : **Svasti mātṛa uta pitṛe no astu  
Svasti gobhyo jagate puruṣebhya,  
Vishvam subhūtam suvidatram no astu  
Devah sa nah subhūtamēha vakshat.**

Let there be well being for our fathers and for our mothers, for our kine, for all men and for all the world. Let the universe carry for us welfare and wisdom. May God bring here to us our welfare.

Leader : **Devah sa nah subhutamēha vakshat, May God bring here to us our welfare.**

President : **Prithivī shantirantarikṣham shanti dyaushanti  
Apah shantiroshadhayah shantirvanaspatayah shanti  
Vishvame devāh shantih sarve me Devāh shantih  
Shantih shantih shantibhih.  
Tabhih shantibhih sarvashantibhih  
Shamayāmoham yadiha ghoram  
yadiha krūrām yadiha pāpam  
Tacchāntam tacchivām sarvameva shamastu nah.**

Let peace reign over the earth and sky: Let it spread upon the waters, in the fields and forests: let the divine powers in the universe be for our peace. Let me, with the peace which is for all, tranquilise whatever is terrible and cruel into the serene and the good. Let peace come to us through the All.

All : **Sarvameva shamastunah, Let peace come to us though the All.**

# VISVA-BHARATI BULLETIN

## I

### The Guest-House of India.

[*Speech by Rabindranath Tagore, in reply to the address of the S raswats at Santa Cruz (near Bombay).*]

It is a great reward to me when I realise that you, who belong to the west of India acknowledge me and receive me as your own poet. It shows that, through my work, I have done something to unite in a bond of sympathy and love the different parts of India; that I belong not only to Bengal, but also to this Province, where you have the same feeling for me as my own people. There are those who have other vocations. They serve their country and bring wealth to it in their own way. But the poet represents the wealth, which not only belongs to the country in which he has born, but to all countries. Therefore, through the poets and idealists, the country to which they belong is brought into close relationship of love with other countries.

Our Motherland has been suffering from her obscurity. For centuries India did not reveal herself. We are even now too much taken up with our immediate grievances and but display our poverty when we go on complaining about the miseries from which we suffer. But India has its positive side. There is the great spiritual wealth which we have inherited and still possess and that has to be given to the world. If we do give it, then we shall be able to reveal ourselves through our wealth and not through our poverty. This inherited wealth has its responsibilities, for it gives us the power to invite others to share it, and the acceptance of our hospitality is the best honour we can receive from the world.

We know in India that the householder, the *Grihasta*, is honoured when the guest comes to his door. It is not the guest who is under an obligation, as is often assumed in western countries, where it is considered to be a privilege to be asked to become a guest by the host. It is just the contrary with us. It is the host who realises that it is a privilege and honour to be able to receive guests into his house. Therefore, it has been said in our Scriptures: **Atithi devobhava:** The *atithi* (guest) is divine, because he brings to our home the great ideal of the spiritual unity of all human beings. We are tied by a bond of natural affinity to our kinsmen; and when we

serve them, we merely serve ourselves. But when we offer service to our guests, then we offer service to humanity; and the Divine Being comes to our door as *Atithi* claiming that service.

It has been said in the Upanishads, that only they who realise Truth become immortal. Our ancestors did realise that Truth which gives the right to immortality. Therefore they offered their invitation to the whole world to come and share the spiritual wealth which had come to them. They said: "Let all come from all lands." The seer, who realised this great truth exclaimed to the whole world:

**Srinvantu vishve'mritasya putráh.....vedáhametam purusham mahántam ádityavarnam tamasah parastát.**

*"Ye, who are the children of the Immortal, hearken to me, for I have known this, the Supreme Being, the Infinite Personality, from across the darkness."*

When the seer of the Upanishads realised this in his own self,—this great Light coming from across the darkness—he did not think that it was only for his own use, he sent out his invitation to the entire human race. He said to all mankind: "Ye are the children of the Immortal."

This invitation has already gone forth from our ancestors. They sent it out to the whole world. Now it is our duty and responsibility to take up that same call of invitation and to ask the world to come to us. We must say once again that the truth which gave immortality had been realised by our forefathers; and this great spiritual wealth we have inherited from them has not perished. The light is not extinct.

And who is to acclaim it to the world but your Poet? If I have done that service, if I have sent out that invitation of India, then I can come to you with a proud heart, and I can claim your help to enable me to build up this guest-house of India at Santiniketan. We all know that the real duty of a *grihasta* remains unperformed, if he makes no provision for his guests. Modern India has hitherto made no provision for those from other lands who are seekers after truth, and come to her door asking for help, who are longing to find spiritual sustenance from the store of wisdom which they believe has come down to us from our ancestors and they have asked it of you through me, whom they took to be your representative. I offered India's invitation to them and they were willing to accept it.

You all know that, in olden times, we had great universities at Nálándá and Takshasilá, where students used to come from China, from Western Asia, and even from Europe. That was a time of great glory to

our Motherland. Now that time has come once more. The opportunity is before us again. Dr. Foulkes, the great archæologist, came to Santiniketan once. He said to me that Europe was going through an *Indian Renaissance*. I thought that he was merely paying me a compliment ; and did not take him at all seriously at that time. But when I went to the continent of Europe, I was fully convinced of the truth of his remark.

The first country which I visited was Holland. Everywhere, in all the great universities, and in other places where I spoke, how keen they were to know something about the solution of the problem of existence which our ancestors offered to the world ! In France, in Switzerland,—everywhere I went, it was the same thing. I only wished there had been some of my own countrymen present. It is almost unbelievable, the enthusiasm with which they greeted the message of India that I brought to them. In Germany, I had occasion to meet philosophers and scientists and students, from Heidelberg, Leipzig and other universities. They flocked round me, not to do honour to an individual, but to a poet who represented the ideals of India.

They all came to me and said : “Sir, we have lost our faith in our teachers.” They wanted something more satisfying, and they expected that from India. When I realised this, I thought it was my own responsibility and duty to offer them our hospitality, in the name of my Motherland ; and I have done so, to the best of my power.

Therefore now I have come to beg from my countrymen that this *yajña* may be performed by the help of the children of this land. I thank you for whatever gifts you bring to me for our Visva-bharati, not only because that will help me in my mission, but also because it will relieve me personally of a great burden of responsibility and enable me to go back to my own true vocation as a poet. For you must realise that you, who have come to honour me, as your own national poet of India, must give me leisure to pursue my own work as such.

I must be relieved even of Visva-bharati. Visva-bharati belongs to every one of you. It is open to any one to come and take up its burden. You are welcome, because you have the right ; it belongs to you all, and it is only waiting to be owned by you. I hope that a day will come when every one of you will want to say : “It is mine.”

You know how the university of Nālandā was started. It was supported by householders. Merchants brought their help in kind, not

merely in money. From every part of India assistance came. I hope that Visva-bharati, which claims to belong to India, will meet with the same good fortune ; that householders of modern India will come to help the Brahmacháris there, and also the scholars who come to it from other parts of the world.

## II

### The Meaning of Visva-Bharati.

*[Address given by C. F. Andrews on behalf of Vishva-bharati to the students of Travancore, during Rabindranath Tagore's visit.]*

In the first place I wish to represent to you what I feel to be the world situation after the Great War. Secondly, I shall try further to put before you what I think to be the one vital factor in the Indian situation.

With regard to the world situation, I have been taught by Rabindranath, the poet, to believe that we stand at the dawn of a new era in human history. These are very big words to utter ; but I truly believe that the late war, with all its world-wide influences, has been a greater historic event than the French Revolution, which shook the whole of Europe and America just a hundred years ago.

The difference between these two great shocks of revolution is this. While the French Revolution affected Europe and America only, the recent war has shaken the whole world. It has broken down the last geographical barriers separating the East from the West. Asia has been stirred almost as much as Europe, though Asia has not suffered as Europe has suffered. Of one thing we can be quite certain to-day. The East is no longer still wrapped in slumber as it was a century ago, at the time of the French Revolution ; Asia, from end to end, is restlessly awake.

The war has had two effects. One has been what we may call spiritual. Men's minds have been stirred as they have never been stirred before for many generations. Of that I shall speak later. But there is another side that is vitally important. The discoveries of science, owing to the urgency of the war period, have been so accelerated,—especially with regard to inter-communication,—that in five or six years the whole outer world has been changed.

Let me give you one single illustration. When I was a child, I used to pore eagerly over all the maps of the different continents of the world, which were in my father's library. I remember quite distinctly a map of Africa, in which the whole of Central Africa was marked by the one word 'unexplored.' Yet only last year I went by steam-boat, by rail, and by motor car, into the very heart of Central Africa, in order to understand the difficulties of the Indians who are living abroad. I found that in the country, which was marked 'unexplored' in that earlier atlas, you can keep in the closest touch with Bombay and Calcutta, while you go along the main routes. You can also ride swiftly from place to place in a motor car there in the very middle of Central Africa.

The same thing has been effected in every part the world. Everywhere to-day the races are coming into contact with one another with the utmost rapidity. Still further, what is taking place so quickly in the present year is going to happen with still more increased speed during the next five years. The aeroplane unquestionably will soon become the common mode of locomotion. Before you, who are now young men, are fully grown up, you will all of you be flying!

In the same way the telephone can now ring up a city which is on the other side of a continent. Radio-telegraphy has advanced so quickly in America during the last few months, that even private individuals can get wireless messages from distant places by their own private wireless apparatus. We are assured, at the same time, that very soon actual images of distant living faces, will be made visible upon a sensitive plate and printed off by some process of photo-telegraphy. All these things are occurring in our own times, and this great movement towards the outward intercourse of mankind is advancing with inevitable speed every day.

Here, then, is the picture which I have tried to set before your eyes, in order to illustrate on its physical side the present world situation.

But over against that picture I want to put another fact about the modern world, which is far more serious in its consequences. There is the danger, the ever increasing danger, of the races, after having come together, not really uniting, but rather becoming more and more spiritually divided. The *outward* meeting of the races has been made easy, owing to scientific advances; but when the races have thus come near to one another, their contact has proved to be something like the negative and positive poles of electricity. There is a flash, and a shock, and you see them flying apart.



The modern world, as far as I have seen it,—and I am speaking from a wide experience,—seems to me to be fuller of racial hatred and bitterness between nations than it was before the war. These evils seem somehow to have come out more visibly and openly, like some fatal disease lurking within the body of humanity, which instead of being driven back by the world crisis, has been made more actively acute. The fever is now at its height.

So to-day, throughout the world, we see the beginnings of a new and terrible struggle a new growth of that human callousness, which in India has been called 'untouchability.' All the old problems, which for centuries have been vexing the soul of India, as she has endeavoured to set herself free from race prejudice, are now being reproduced in the larger field of the whole world. That, as far as I can understand it, is the world situation to-day on its spiritual side.

What then can I say about the Indian situation? What is your position in India, face to face with this spiritual menace in the larger world? Can **you** here in Travancore help the world in this impending conflict? Can **you** give the world any forward spiritual impetus which may serve to counteract this new world-evil? Can **you**, from India, send out any message of love and peace and hope to the whole human race?

No! You cannot, so long as you insist on keeping your own untouchable problem unsolved at home. That is my most serious message to you, and I hope you will heed it. Mahatma Gandhi would have given the same message,—nay, he is giving it through my lips. You cannot send out to the world any spiritual message effectively, while your own untouchability problem remains unregarded. You must either deal with it courageously and help to solve it, or else prove traitors to humanity.

I have told the following two incidents often; but I wish to repeat them to you in their completeness, for they are full of meaning.

In South Africa, I was with Mahatma Gandhi's son, Ramdas, who was very dear to me. One evening we were in Johannesburg Station waiting for the Durban Mail. When it came in, Ramdas went into the compartment to put my hand-bag on my seat. First of all, a young English lad caught hold of him and would have beaten him, if I had not prevented him; and then the European conductor was about to assault him and I had to stop him also.

You may imagine all that I felt, and how my heart was bursting with indignation. This insult was offered simply because Ramdas was an Indian. This carriage was a 'European quarter.' There, in South Africa, the Indian was the 'untouchable.' According to European opinion, the Indian had to be 'segregated'. The whole South African struggle has been fought out by Mahatma Gandhu in order to prevent such 'segregation.'

Now let us turn to another picture. A little time ago, when I came last time with the Poet, to Palghat in Malabar, I went down one of the streets, walking side by side with a young medical student, who had a strikingly intellectual face and gave me great pleasure by his company. He was telling me concerning the difficulties he had encountered while trying to obtain his own medical training. He had even had to stay back for a year in order to earn enough money to continue his studies. When he finished his course, he was determined to go and help his own countrymen and become a doctor in the Malabar villages, which he knew so well.

Just as we were proceeding, he suddenly ran off and left me. I turned round to my companion and said,—“I do hope, I have not done anything to offend him.” My companion answered: “No, *you* have done nothing; but this street is a 'Brahmin quarter', and had he dared to enter it he would have been beaten, perhaps almost to death.”

Here again, you may imagine how my heart was wrung with pain. I met the young student again, at the end of the road, and said to him; “You must enter this quarter without fear. That is the only thing to do. You should face even martyrdom,—but break this inhuman custom you must.” I then asked him to come back with me and he did so.

In each instance, the evil is one and the same thing. An Indian who had settled in South Africa said to me: “Now I know that the Law of Karma is inexorable. For just as we have treated our own brothers and sisters in India by making them 'untouchables', even so we are being made pariahs and outcastes to-day.”

Therefore I am afraid my message must be a stern one. I must try to tell you the truth. If you are ready to take up this problem and solve it in your own country, then indeed, you can send forth your spiritual message to the world. Then indeed you can relate your spiritual experiences to men of other lands in their new race conflicts and they will hear you. But you can never do anything at all, if your hands are tied fast with your own ropes.

Many years ago, I was in South Africa with Mahatma Gandhi, when in the very midst of his passive resistance movement, he was struggling, even through going to prison again and again, to get rid of those evils, with which his countrymen were being kept in subjection by my own race.

In the Mahatma's ashram at Phocnix, where I used to live with him, he had adopted a baby who was an untouchable. He had made this little girl his own daughter. That child of his is now in India. She is still as his own daughter. That one act of Mahatma Gandhi is worth ten thousand speeches. I know,—because I have been with him all these years,—I know how, in his heart of hearts, there is no other single cause in all the world, that he ardently desires more than the removal of untouchability from the whole of this country of India.

Very soon after my return from South Africa, I was with Rābindranath Tagore, in the Ashram at Santiniketan. I came to him one evening and found his face filled with a look of intense pain. He told me the cause. All the afternoon he had been seated with a *Namasudra* from some village in Bengal, who had told him the simple story of his own life as an outcaste and what he had to suffer. The Poet took him into his own house and kept him there many days. Meanwhile he sought in every way to find a means of providing, not merely a temporary help, but a permanent remedy for the evils from which he and his people had suffered.

I have felt this so deeply in my own heart, that wherever I meet young men, I am obliged to tell them these truths as clearly and as unflinchingly as I can, so that they may sink deep into their hearts with conviction. I have a right to do so ; for I have fought and struggled against the same evils in my own countrymen, and I have suffered for so doing. Therefore I plead with you, young men, in the name of Mahatma Gandhi and in the name of the poet, Rābindranath Tagore, to remove this great curse of untouchability from our midst, so that once more India may raise her head among the peoples of the world, as a country of the free, where moral justice is everywhere loved and cherished. That is my hope. That is my longing. That is my ideal.

Furthermore, if you ask me whether there is one place in India where this ideal can be carried out to the full, where there is not only no untouchability but also no barrier of any kind between the East and the West, I would point you to Santiniketan.

There the Poet's father, Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, had originally founded an Ashram many years ago, in which there should be no distinction whatever of race or colour or creed or sect; and the Poet, Rabindranath Tagore, his son, has since then founded in his turn our Visva-bharati, where East and West and North and South may meet in a common and mutual fellowship of study and work, for the fulfilment of the unity of the human race.

Here, where I have spent nearly ten of the happiest years of my life, I have learnt to throw away the last shreds of race prejudice, which may have remained lurking within me, and to hold dearer than life itself this fundamental faith of the one great brotherhood of man. It is to this Ashram that I would invite you. I would ask to come and share our work; and if your presence there is impossible, I would ask you at least to share our ideal and to associate yourselves with us in whatever way you can. Thus you will learn more and more every day to enter into the great constructive work of unity and brotherhood, which the human race in our own generation is called upon to fulfil.

### III

#### The Parasurama Tradition and its Significance.

By P. ANUJAN ACHARYA.

(Research Student of Visvabharati, Santiniketan.)

#### I. THE ANCESTRY OF PARASURAMA.

The name Parasurama is not found in the *Veda*, but he is said to be the descendant of Bhrigu, whose name is well-known in Vedic literature.(1) According to the *Mahābhārata*,(2) he is the son of Yamadagni,(3) who is mentioned in the *Rigveda* as one of the mythical sages.(4) The Bhrigus

(1) Bhrigu, in the singular, refers to a son of Varuna, with the patronymic Vārūni. Vide, *Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa* III 34; *Sātapatha-Brāhmaṇa* XI 6.1.1; *Taittirīya-Aranyaka* IX 1, etc.

Bhrigu, in the plural, refers to a priestly clan who are repeatedly alluded to as devoted to the fire cult. Vide, *Rigveda* I 58.6; 127.7; 143.4; II 4.2; III 2.4; IV 7.1. See also, Macdonell-Keith, *Vedic Index* II, p. 108.

(2) The Bombay Edition of the *Mahābhārata* is being quoted throughout.

(3) Vide, *Mahābhārata*, *Aranyaparvan*, *adhyāya* 115, v. 4; *Adiparvan*, *adhyāya*, 66, v. 48.

(4) In some passages Yamadagni's name occurs in such a way as to indicate that he is the author of the hymn. Vide, *Rigveda* III 62.18; VIII 101.8; IX 62.24; 65.25. (He is also quite a frequent figure in the *Maitrāyaṇī-Saṃhitā*, *Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā*, *Pañcaviṃśa-Brāhmaṇa*, *Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa*, *Sātapatha-Brāhmaṇa*, *Taittirīya-Aranyaka*, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, etc.—see, *Vedic Index* I, p. 276.)

were a group of ancient priests. In the *Taittirīya-Samhitā* they are mentioned as priests in connection with *Agnishāpana* and similar rites.(5) That the Bhrigus also possessed the qualities of warriors, we shall see later on.

In *adhyāya* 66, vv. 42-48 of the *Adiparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*, is given a list of the ancestors of Yamadagni. Richika is said to be Yamadagni's father, who was the son of Aurva whose father was Chyavana who was the second son of Bhrigu, the first being Sukra. But in Asvalāyana's list of the Pravara Rishis of the gotra of *Yamadagnyāh Vatsāh* the names are Bhārgava, Chyāvana, Apnavāna, Aurva and Yamadagni, without any mention of Richika.(6) It is to be noted that while Chyāvana and Aurva are mentioned in the *Brāhmanas* as Bhrigus,(7) no mention of either Richika or Apnavāna is to be found in Vedic literature.

It may seem strange that Parasurāma has no place in Vedic literature, while his father, Yamadagni finds frequent mention from the time of the *Rigveda* onwards. A Rāma has been mentioned in the *Rigveda* (X 93. 14) but it was only the name of an ordinary man. In the *Satapatha-Brāhmana* (IV 6.1.7) another Rāma is mentioned, a teacher and a descendant of Upatasvina. A third Rāma is mentioned in the *Jaimintya-Upanishad-Brāhmana* (III 40.1, IV 16.1) a descendant of Kratujāta and also a teacher. A fourth Rāma, Rāma Mārgaveya (descendant of Mrigu), is mentioned in the *Āitarēya-Brāhmana* (VII 27.3). This Rāma was in someway connected with a priestly family of the Syāparnas, and was learned in sacred knowledge. Once Rāma Mārgaveya is said to have championed the cause of the Syāparnas against a king called Visvantara, because he had performed a sacrifice without the aid of the former, who had been officiating till then as his family priest.(8) Scholars are inclined to think that this last Rāma may probably be Parasurāma.(9)

(5) *Taittirīya-Samhitā* IV 6.5.2; V 6.8.6; Vedic Index Vol. II, p. 109.

(6) *Vide*, Max Müller's *History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature* (Ed. 1912), pp. 195-196.

Chyavana is here (in *Asvalāyana-Srautasūtra*) mentioned as Chyāvana. We shall see subsequently that in the *Rigveda* (X 61.1-3) he is called Chyavāna.

(7) Chyavana is called a Bhrigu or Angīrasa in the *Satapatha-Brāhmana* (IV 1.5.1) Aurva, a Bhrigu in the *Kausītaki-Brāhmana* (XXX 5); Vedic Index Vol. I, p. 265, and 129.

(8) *Āitarēya-Brāhmana* VII 27; Muir's *Sanskrit Texts*, part I, p. 173; Vedic Index I, p. 155.

(9) Prof. Max Müller in a note (*see*, his *History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, p. 251) remarks: "Mārgaveya is a difficult name. It may be simply, as Śāyana says, the son of his mother Mrigu; but Mrigu may be a variety of Bhrigu, and thus confirm Lassen's conjecture that this Rāma is Rāma, the son of Yamadagni, of the race of Bhrigu, commonly called Parasurāma".

The ancestors of Parasurāma, who are wellknown in the *Veda*, were no doubt a class of priests. But they were also possessed of certain martial qualities, which whenever necessary they did not fail to use. Thus, in the battle of the ten Kings, the Bhrigus appeared with the Druhyus (*Rigveda* VII. 18.6).<sup>(10)</sup> Chyavāna, who is said to be the son of Bhrigu, seems (in *Rigveda*, X 61. 1-3) to have been opposed to the Paktha prince, Turvayāna, an Indra worshipper. In the *Jaiminīya-Brāhmaṇa* (III. 121—128) it is related that Vidanvant, another son of Bhrigu, supported Chyāvāna against Indra.<sup>(11)</sup> The story of Aurva, as given in the *Mahābhārata* (*Adiparvan*, *adhyaayas* 178—180) relates that Aurva, the descendant of the Bhrigus who had been the family priests of King Kritavīrya, meditated the destruction of all living creatures in revenge for the insult done to his race by the sons of Kritavīrya. This only shows how well Parasurāma deserves to be counted as one of the Bhrigus.

## 2. PARASURAMA IN THE EPICS.

In the *Mahābhārata*, *Aranyaparvan*, the story of Parasurāma is related in three *adhyaayas*, viz., 115, 116, 117. The first, among these, deals with the story of Parasurāma's birth.<sup>(12)</sup> He was born as the fifth son of Yamadagni and his wife Renukā, and as the grandson of Richika, who had as his wife Satyavati, the sister of Viswāmītra and the daughter of King Gādhi. The second *adhyaaya* relates how Parasurāma, at his father's command, put his mother to death; she being restored to life by his father at his request. Once, Arjuna Kārtavīrya, King of the Haihayas, is said to have gone to Yamadagni's hermitage, where he was respectfully received. But he requited the hospitality received by him by forcibly carrying away the calf of the sage's sacrificial cow. Rāma, hearing this, went to fight with Arjuna and put him to death; whereupon Arjuna's sons, in return, slew the sage, Yamadagni, during the absence of his son Parasurāma. The third *adhyaaya* deals with the rest of the story. Parasurāma, in revenge, vowed to destroy the whole Kshatriya race; and began by killing, first, Arjuna's sons. And then twenty-one times he swept away

(10) Also see, Vedic Index I, p. 109.

(11) *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 265.

(12) Slokas 9 to 19 of *adhyaaya* 115, which deal with the part played by the devas, including Vishnu, in the birth of Parasurāma, are omitted in two Southern MSS. of the *Mahābhārata* (one Malayālam MS. belonging to the *Pāliyam Family* of Jayantamangalam, Cochin State; and one Grantha MS., No. 1666 of the Mysore Library), while they are found in one Bengālī MS. No. 327 of the Viswabhārati Library, all of which I have compared with the text of the Bombay Edition. It seems to me that this passage might have been a later interpolation, brought in only to establish the divine character of Parasurāma.

the Kshatriya race from the earth, and formed five lakes of blood in *Samantapanchaka* (*Kurukshetra*), where he offered oblation (*tarpana*) to his departed forefathers. He, then, performed a sacrifice to Indra, at which he gave away the whole earth to Káshyapa and other priests, and retired to mount *Mahendra*.

This is the Parasuráma-legend in the *Añanyaparvan* of the *Mahábhārata*. Five chief points may here be noted, *viz.* :

- (i) that Arjuna Kártavírya carried away by force the calf of the sage's sacrificial cow ;
- (ii) that Parasuráma, in anger, went and killed Arjuna ;
- (iii) that Parasuráma formed five lakes of blood to propitiate his forefathers ;
- (iv) that he, in a sacrifice, gave over the earth to Bráhmans ;
- (v) that Parasuráma retired to mount *Mahendra*.

It seems strange that in another version of the same legend in the *Shantiparvan*, *adhyáya* 49, of the *Mahábhārata*, though the main story is the same, there is hardly any mention of any of the five points noted above, except the fourth, *viz.*, that Parasuráma made a gift of the earth to the Bráhman priests. In this version, Arjuna Kártavírya is represented as a dutiful and religious monarch, who bestowed on the Bráhmans the whole of the territory he had conquered. Moreover, the theft of the sage's calf is here ascribed not to Arjuna, but to his sons, for whose crimes Arjuna had his arms cut off by Parasuráma. The destruction of the Kshatriyas for twenty-one times, by the latter is mentioned as also his gift of the whole earth to Káshyapa, as a sacrificial fee. But here we are not told anything of the lakes of blood formed by Parasuráma wherewith he propitiated his forefathers. A more curious part of this version is that which deals with the rest of Parasuráma's life.(13) Here, we are told that Káshyapa, in order that the remaining Kshatriyas might be saved, did not allow Parasuráma to remain in his realm, but sent him to the shore of the Southern Ocean. Whereupon, the waters receded, and a new land was created for Râma, called *Súrpáraka*.(14)

(13) *Bide, Sántiparvan, adhyáya* 49, vv. 65-89.

(14) This is found both in the Southern and the Bengáli recensions of the *Mahábhārata* which I have compared; such as, for instance, the *Paliyam Family* MS. of the *Sántiparvan*, the *Grantha* MS. No. 1666 of the Mysore Library, and one *Malayálam* MS. No. 1096 and two *Bengáli* MSS. No. 6 and 14 of the *Visvabhārati* Library. While all the other MSS. mention *Súrpáraka*, the Bengáli MS. No. 6 has it changed to *Súrpákara*. The tenth Nasik cave inscription of the second century A.D. calls it *Sorpáraka*; (*Epigraphica Indica*, Vol. VIII, p. 78).

The special feature of this version of the legend is, that both Arjuna and Parasurāma are represented as less cruei which is a distinct proof that it belongs to a later period of more advanced manners. In the first, the son of a Rishi is described as something like a blood-thirsty demon, forming five lakes of blood after the destruction of the whole Kshatriya race thrice seven times, and, what is more, propitiating his forefathers with the blood thus formed, which ascriptions are surely an outrage upon the saintly character of the Bhrigus, if not on the whole Brāhman race. It is a relief to find this minimised in the second version of the legend.

Before proceeding further, let us examine a third version of the same legend as given in the *Anushasanaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*. The story of Arjuna is given in *adhyāyas* 152-157, where he is represented as a puissant monarch of unquestioned valour, ruling over the whole earth and recking naught of the claims to superiority of the Brāhman. The god Vāyu remonstrated with him from his place in the skies and advised him to abandon his sinful disposition, and do reverence to the Brāhman, who, he threatened, would otherwise expel him from his kingdom. Arjuna in reply taxed the god with partiality to the Brāhman. But Vāyu, after adducing various considerations, convinced the king at length of the superior might of the Brāhman. So far for Arjuna. The story of Parasurāma is given in *adhyāya* 84, where the story is that Parasurāma ridding the world of Kshatriyas 21 times performed a horse-sacrifice and thereby freed himself from sin and attained great glory. Nevertheless, being still troubled with qualms about the deeds he had committed, Parasurāma took further counsel from the Rishis who advised him to bestow largesse of cows, land and other riches, especially gold, the purifying power of which was very great. And after doing so he at last was finally freed from all sin.

It is practically undisputed that by the time the legend of Parasurāma and Arjuna received its third form, the Brāhman were enjoying, or at least could definitely claim, a distinctly superior position in Hindu Society. The Kingship would seem to have become a dependency to priesthood, for we are told that even the mighty Arjuna, who had been declaring that no Brāhman was superior to him in act, thought, or word, was compelled in the end to do reverence to the Brāhman.

In the *Bālakānda*, *adhyāyas* 74-75, of the *Ramayana*, Parasurāma is represented as a terrible figure with his matted locks and his irresistible axe and bow, unmovable like mount *Kailāsa* and burning like the flame of



*Kálágni*. Here, Parasuráma is said to have approached Ráma, the son of Dasharatha, who was on his way to *Ayodhyá* from the kingdom of Janaka, and offered him his *Vaishnava* bow which was first presented to his grandfather Richika by Vishnu. Parasuráma, then, related his own story to Ráma, telling the latter how his father Yamadagni had been slain by Arjuna, and how he, himself, after destroying the Kshatriya race time after time, had offered the whole earth to Káshyapa as a sacrificial fee, and thereafter retired to mount *Mahendra*.

### 3. PARASURAMA IN THE PURANAS.

In the *Vishnupurána* (book IV. ch. 11) and the *Bhágavatapurána* (book IX. ch. 15-16),(15) we find the later developments of the same legend. In the latter, we are told that Yamadagni was greatly exercised to hear of the death of King Arjuna at the hands of his son Parasuráma. The father told him that he had committed sin by slaying Arjuna, for, he said, to kill a King, who had been formally installed, was worse than to kill a Bráhmaṇ.(16) Hence he advised him to go and expiate his sin by visiting holy places, with his mind intent upon Achyuta (*Vishnu*). In both the *Visnupurána* and the *Bhágavatapurána*, Parasuráma is represented as an avatara of Visnu, an idea which does not occur anywhere in the *Mahabharata* or *Rámáyana*. In the *Visnupurana* he is described as *Narayanamsa*., and in the *Bhagavatapurana* as *Vasudevamsa*.

### 4. BRAHMANS AND KSHATRIYAS.

This progressive development of the Parasuráma legend, must have a deeper significance than the mere change of story. What suggests itself to me is that it signifies the struggle between the two upper classes for supremacy, which terminated, at last, in the subjection of the Kshatriya race and the triumph of the Bráhmans through Parasuráma. This struggle is also seen to continue in historical times. Its can be traced back to the pre-Buddhistic period for instance, the story given in the *Aitareya-Bráhmaṇa* (VII. 27) about Ráma Márgaveya is indicative of this same struggle for supremacy between these two classes, the priests and the fighting men. The undisputed position which till then had been occupied by the priesthood in all kinds of religious ceremonies was being questioned.

(15) See, also Muir's Sanskrit Texts, Part I, pp. 160 and 171.

(16) Manu refers to the divine origin of Kings in VII. vv. 4-9.

Subsequently, when we come to the Buddhist period, we see that the sacrifices, which had all along been the source of profit and advantage to the priests, had slowly begun to lose their importance. And the nobles of the warrior class gained the upperhand. "It will sound most amazing," remarks Prof. Rhys Davids,<sup>(17)</sup> "to those familiar with Brahmin pretensions (either in modern times in India, or in priestly books such as Manu and the epics) to hear the Brahmin spoken of as "low-born". Yet that precisely is an epithet applied to them in comparison with the Kings and nobles. And it ought to open our eyes as to their relative importance in these early times."

This struggle between the priests and the nobles seems to have continued till the beginning of the Gupta period. At least, it was still acute in the second century after Christ, because up to that time we have no epigraphical records, whatsoever, to evidence that the Brahmins had the upperhand in society. Only in the second century after Christ, as Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar points out,<sup>(18)</sup> do the inscriptions begin to record grants of land to Bráhmans. In the third century there are also a few instances. From the fourth century onwards, we are told, these inscriptions are quite numerous, showing a marked rise in Bráhmaṇ influence. The Gupta Kings are then stated to have performed sacrifices and given numerous grants of land to Bráhmans, and to the temples in their charge. Before the second century A. D. back to the third century B. C. there are numerous records of gifts made by kings, princes, chiefs, as well as by merchants, artisans and others. But, not one of these is given in support of anything with which the Bráhmans had any connection. And whereas the latter inscriptions recording gifts in favour of the Bráhmans are in Sanskrit, the earlier ones with which Bráhmans had nothing to do are in a sort of Pali.

These facts lead me to surmise that the legend of Parasuráma as recorded in the *Aranyaparvan* cannot be earlier than the second century after Christ, when we find the first records as to grants of land made to Bráhmans.

##### 5. MODERN TRADITIONS ABOUT PARASURAMA.

Whereas, we are told, in the *Aranyaparvan* that after the extirpation of the Kshatriya race, Parasuráma made a gift of the whole earth to

(17) See, Rhys David's *Buddhist India*, p. 60.

(18) See, Rhys David's *Buddhist India*, pp. 150—151.

Kasyapa himself retiring to Mt. Mahendra. We find in the *Santiparvan* that Kashyapa after receiving the earth from Parasurāma, did not allow the latter to remain in his realm, but sent him over to the Southern Ocean, whereupon the sea receded and a new land was created for him to live, called *Sūrpāraka*. It may be of interest to note here, that a tradition is still current in the *Konkanadesh*,<sup>(19)</sup> the land of the Konkana Brāhmins, that their land was taken out of the sea by Parasurāma when Kashyapa sent him away from his own kingdom. Parasurāma, it is said, performed here a sacrifice to conduct which he had to create Brāhmins. There still exists a village in the Ratnāgiri district with the name of *Srī-Parasurāma*, where there is a temple dedicated to him.<sup>(20)</sup>

Another tradition of the same type is current in *Kerala*, a long stretch of land extending from Kokarnam to Kumārīn (Cape Comorin).<sup>(21)</sup> The Brāhmins of *Kerala*, called the Nambūtiris, are mostly the owners of land, who trace their title to its sole ownership to the original grant by Parasurāma, the incarnation of Vishnu! According to their own tradition these Brāhmins were brought by Parasurāma from the banks of the Krishna and the Godavari,<sup>(22)</sup> while there is also another tradition to the effect that they were brought from *Samantapanchaka* (or *Kurukshetra*),<sup>(23)</sup> after Parasurāma offered oblation to his departed forefathers from the five lakes of the blood of the exterminated Kshatriyas.<sup>(24)</sup>

These Brāhmins might have been originally a group of colonists from the north, who first settled on the banks of the Godavari and the Krishna, and afterwards migrated through Gokarnam into *Kerala*, and farther south. Probably a branch of the same colonists might have gone along the source of the Godavari (which is not far from *Sūrpāraka* or *Soppara*) to the *Konkanadesa* that lies along the Western Sea. While the Nasik cave

(19) The *Konkana* land is situated within the limits of the Presidency of Bombay, extending from the Portuguese settlement of Goa (near Gokarnam) on the south, to the territory of Daman on the north. It may be estimated at 300 miles in length with an average breadth of about 40 miles; (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. XV, p. 896).

(20) I am indebted to my class-mate Mr. G. B. Bāpat, B.A., himself a *Konkana* Brāhmin, for kindly giving me this information.

(21) *Kerala* comprises the north and the south Kānaras, British Malabār, Cochin and Travancore.

(22) This tradition has been recorded in a Sanskrit work, that goes by the name "*Kerala-Māhātmya*," which is considered to be very sacred and which exists in manuscripts in every ancient home of *Kerala*. I have been able to go through a MS. belonging to the *Pāṭiyam Family*, and have found the above tradition in its XI *adhyāya*.

(23) This tradition is recorded in a Malayālam work of ancient traditions, called "*Keralotpatti*". (See, the Trichur Edition of 1886 M. E.)

(24) Vide, *Mahabharata*, *Aranyaparvan*, *adhyāya* 117, vv. 9—10; *Adiparvan*, *adhyāya* 2, vv. 4—5.

inscriptions,(25) near *Sûrphâraka*, prove that Bráhmans had settled there about the second century A. D., the inscriptions of Kákusthavarmān(26) of the *Kadamba* dynasty indicate a settlement of Bráhmans south of Gokarnam somewhere about the fifth century A. D., and also the approximate time of the advent of Bráhmanism into those countries.

#### 6. PARASURAMA IN MYTHOLOGY.

A considerable time must have elapsed before Parasuráma came to be included among the ten popular *avatara* of Vishnu. We know for certain that nowhere in the *Mahábhárata*, nor in the *Rámáyana*, is Parasuráma described as an incarnation of Vishnu. Only when we come to the time of the *Puránas* do we find Parasuráma included among the *avatáras*.

It seems curious that Parasuráma should be considered an *avatára* of Vishnu, rather than of Siva. Nowhere in the *Mahábhárata* or in the *Rámáyana*, not even in the *Visnupurána* or in the *Bhagavatapurana* are we told that Parasuráma was a devotee of Náráyana or Vásudeva, while we find in almost all the versions of the legend dealing with him some passage or other reperring to his connection with Siva or Mahadeva. In the *Sántiparvan*, for instance (see *adhyáya* 49. v. 33), Parasuráma is said to have propitiated Mahádeva and obtained, among other things, the irresistible axe (*parasu*), from which his name is derived. In the *Karnaparvan* (*adhyáya* 34. vv. 128—154) there is a long passage relating how Parasuráma served Mahádeva in order to obtain divine weapons from him. Parasuráma's dreadful wrath provoked at the breaking of Siva's *dhanus* (bow) by Rámachandra, is described in the *Rámáyana* (*Balakanda*, *adhyáya* 74). In the *Keralamáhátmya*, again, we have a story which speaks of the connection of Parasuráma with Mahádeva.(27) Here, we are told that Parasuráma, after depriving himself of all the earth by presenting it to the Bráhmans, retired to mount Kailása, and propitiated Siva in order to procure from him a land to live in. Siva, pleased with his devotion, sent his own son Kumára to his help, in order to induce the ocean to cede a portion of land to Ráma. They both went over to the Southern region (*daksinám disam*), and after a great struggle managed to extort a strip, of land from Varuna on the west-coast, extending from Kumárin to Gokarnam. In the tenth *adhyáya* of the *Máhátmya* it is related, how

(25) *Vide*, Epigraphica Indica, Vol. VIII, p. 78.

(26) *Vide*, Epigraphica Indica, Vol. VIII, p. 32.

(27) The story given below is narrated in the 5th, 6th and the 7th *adhyáyas* of the *Keralamáhátmya*.

Parasuráma erected a temple at Gokarnam dedicated to Mahádeva. These stories show that Parasuráma was devoted almost exclusively to Síva and not to Vishnu. Moreover his repeated extermination of the Kshatriyas is more in line with the activities of Mahádeva, the destroyer (*Samháraka*)!

Mr. Náráyana Aiyangár of Mysore, the author of "Essays on Indo-Aryan Mythology," (part II p. 351) points out several points of similarity between the stories about Agni's son Kumára or Skanda and those about Yamadagni's son Ráma. He says (pp. 372-373) that "phenomenally Parasuráma was *Chandrasúrya*, who killed the moon and the stars with his superior light," and that "the Kshatriyas killed by Ráma were only the Na-Kshatras". And, further, "the enemy slain by Kumára being Asura Mahisha according to one account and Táraka according to another, Arjuna, who was put to death by Ráma must have been the moon, the lord of stars, and his capital was called *Máhishmati*". This does not seem to me very plausible. Kumára or Skanda, with his six heads and twelve arms, born of the wives the seven Rishis in adultery with Agni, appears to be more of a mythological character, while Parasuráma is but the son of a hermit, born in wedlock. Moreover, while Kumára is represented to have fought only once with the demon Mahisha, with the help of a large retinue of *Kumáras* and *Kumáris*, Parasuráma battled singlehanded with his irresistible weapons to root out an entire race.

#### 7. THE MODERN CULT OF PARASURAMA.

However, there is no doubt that Parasuráma is now believed to be the sixth incarnation of Vishnu. I have already mentioned that in *Kerala* the Bráhmans worship Parasuráma, and are specially devoted to him. On a particular day in the month of January or February, the Nambútiri Bráhmans, one and all, observe the *Parasuráma-Jayanti* celebration. There are other places too, in India, where Parasuráma is worshipped, in diverse ways. In Assam, on the eastern border of Lakshimpur district, there is a pool in the Brahmaputra river known by the name of *Brahmakund*. This pool has been formed at a spot where the river emerges from the mountains, and is flanked on both sides by hills. Parasuráma is said to have surrendered at this pool the axe with which he destroyed the Kshatriyas, and it is in consequence visited by Hindu pilgrims from every part of India. (28)

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(28) Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. IX, p. 8.

Kundian is a village in the state of Udaipur, in Rájaputána, situated about 50 miles north-east of the city. Here are many temples, and a pool there called *Mátri-Kundian* is celebrated as the place where the sins of Parasuráma were washed away on his bathing in its waters. A fair, lasting for three days, is held in May and is largely attended by pilgrims who bathe in the pool.(29)

There is a sacred pool at Gokarnam, said to have been dedicated by Parasuráma to Siva. Another pool in Kumárin, attributed to Kumára son of Siva, is considered very sacred, by bathing in which according to the *Keralamáhátmya*, Parasuráma had to purify himself before he could make the request to Varuna to yield up a portion of land.

Near the Kangra district, in the Panjab, there stands a temple dedicated to Parasuráma, in which was deposited a copper-plate deed of grant in Sanskrit (probably of A. D. 612-613), recording the assignment of the village to Bráhmans studying the *Atharvaveda*.(30)

Again, in an old village in the Bijapur district, Bombay, there is an axe-shaped rock on the river-bank in commemoration of Parasuráma, who is said to have washed his axe on the spot after his destruction of the Kshatriya race. On a rock in the river Parasuráma's foot-prints are shown. Near by is a five old temple of *Ramling*.(31)

In a village, in the native state of Mysore, there is a temple to *Parasu*, the irresistible axe of Parasuráma. The ancient name of the village is said to be *Bhārgavapura*.(32)

#### 8. CONCLUSION.

To recapitulate before concluding :

Firstly, we find that the name Parasuráma is not mentioned in the Veda, but some are inclined to identity him with Ráma-Mārgaveya, the descendant of Mrigu.

Secondly, the story of Parasuráma as given in the *Aranyaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata* differs considerably from that of the *Sántiparvan*, the only reason that may be adduced being the interval of probably not less than a century between the two legends.

(29) Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. XVI, p. 26.

(30) Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. XIX, p. 124.

(31) Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. V, p. 129.

(32) Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. XIII, p. 148.

Thirdly, the two points which are practically common to all the versions of the Parasurāma legend are (i) that Parasurāma exterminated the Kshatriyas ; and (ii) that after ridding the earth of them he offered the whole of it to the Brāhmans.

This points to the strained relationship which once existed between the two upper classes ; and which at last terminated in the acknowledgement of the Brahman supremacy by the Kshatriyas, whereby was brought to an end a prolonged struggle between the priests and the nobles,—a struggle that can be traced back historically even to pre-Buddistic times.

Fourthly, for this reason, and by reason of the epigraphical evidence as to grants of land to Brāhmans, the time of the first version of the legend, as recorded in the *Aranyaparvan*, may be put at about the end of the second century after Christ, the two others consecutively coming considerably later.

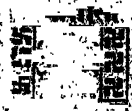
Fifthly, the land of *Sūrpāraka*, which, according to the *Sāntiparvan*, was the last retreat of Parasurāma, may be identified with the modern Soppāra in the Bombay presidency, and which may also be considered at least as old as, probably older than,(33) the Nasik cave inscriptions of the second century A. D., where it is mentioned as *Sorparaga*.

Sixthly, and lastly, we have seen that **Parasurama** was originally in no way connected with Vishnu, but has always been described as a great devotee of Siva ; but, lately he came to be included among the popular avatars of Vishnu and is still worshipped as such by Vaishnavites.

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(33) The author of the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, who came to India in the second or the third century after Christ, mentions Suppāra as a market-town on the west-coast ; (see Schoff's English Translation of 1912, p. 43). It is said to have been the capital of the *Konkana* as early as 500 B.C. According to Buddhist writers, Gautama Buddha, in one of his former births, was a Bodhisattva of Soppāra. Jain writers make frequent mention of Soppāra ; (see, Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. XXIII, p. 87).

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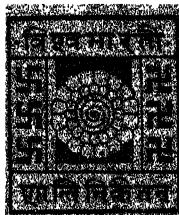
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## THE EAST IN THE WEST

By C. F. ANDREWS.

Although Europe owes so much to the Greeks in the intellectual and spiritual spheres, especially in that region of artistic creation where pure thought and lucid imagination meet, yet the Greek mind, with one singular and hitherto unexplained exception, dwelt rather upon that which was perfect in proportion than that which was beyond all limits.

The exception was Plato. He draws nearest of all among the Greeks to the mind of India. For he is never content merely with the earthly perfection which is visible and to be reached by human endeavour. He is ever seeking for that 'heavenly city, which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God.'

The essential Greek mind came back with a rebound in Aristotle, so sane, so balanced in every subject that he touches, but always falling short of that idealism, to which Plato gave the very name we still use to-day. We might, without any incongruity, imagine Plato taking his abode among the forest dwellers of ancient India; declaring with them: *Listen to me, ye children of the Immortal, I have seen Him, the Infinite Personality, that is beyond Time and Place.* But we can scarcely dream of Aristotle, the realist, dwelling for long in that atmosphere. Some passages in the Greek dramatic poets breathe the same air as Plato, but it is not so marked in them as it is in him.

The Age of Pericles, which was the crown of the Greek Period in human history, owed much of its distinction to this sense of finite proportion in human affairs. The lines of the architecture of the Parthenon have this proportion always in view.

There is no leading architectural line soaring upward to the skies, like those in some of the greatest Hindu temples and in the Gothic cathedral spires. To take another sphere of art, where the Greeks equally excelled, the beauty of the Greek sculpture is in the contour of the perfect physical form of man and woman, realised in white marble without a flaw in the technique. The restraint of the treatment is so severe that there is little place for idealistic flights of the imagination, as in Hindu sculpture.

The same is true in other subjects. Drama, for instance, where once more the Greeks were able to produce a perfect vehicle of art, was controlled by the dramatic unities that strictly limited the field of action. The Muse of History again, to give one more example out of many, when at last she finds her highest exponent in Thucydides, not only creates a form which can never be surpassed, but eschews fable and legend with an exactness that would have satisfied the standards of modern science. Indeed, as we shall see later, modern science itself, with its realistic outlook upon life, is in a very true sense the greatest after-product of the Greek mind.

These wonderful children of antiquity, whose intellect had reached a clarity concerning the visible world which has rarely, if ever, been equalled, shrank back from the infinite and the unlimited as though afraid to venture forward into the darkness. It is a very strange limitation; and it surprises one ever more and more in the Greeks, when one comes back to them after Indian studies.

Still stranger does it become, when one considers the character of Odysseus in the second great epic ascribed to Homer. He is the typical Greek, wise and many-thoughted, who has gone to the verge of the unknown. But here we find that even he shrinks back. There are limits which in his daring adventure he may not cross. He stands at the head of the race, in the dawn of its history, both as an example of its astonishing temerity and its no less astonishing reticence, sanity and proportion.

Recent archaeological researches have shown us against what a background of mad passion and insensate fear this sanity stood out in daily life. The art of Sophocles was created out of the raw material of the revels of the Dionysiac festival. It repre-

sented their sublimation rather than their repression. The Bacchæ of Euripides shows us for a moment that frenzy let loose. The object of the dramatist, as Aristotle finely described it in well-known words, was to cleanse the human mind through fear and pity. We can see the same restraint in the dramatic rule that the gruesome deed of murder should never be enacted on the stage.

It is true, that this supremely sane outlook of the Greeks saved them from gross irrationalisms and superstitions. To the Greek mind at Athens, as the plays of Aristophanes show clearly, the older legends of the gods and goddesses had become objects of laughter and satire rather than belief. But there is a nemesis in human affairs, which always follows close upon the heels of finite perfection. The Greek genius was amazingly short-lived. It is true that its results persisted. But its achievements were crowded into one glorious century; and then the blossom faded. We have not been able again to reach that exquisite completeness, which marked Athens at its prime; but in many other ways we have advanced far further and discovered things of which the Athenian intellect never even dreamt.

It would be true, perhaps, to suggest that Europe to-day, with its new world-problems of psychology, philosophy, and religion, which have to be dealt with one by one, has more to learn from ancient India than from ancient Greece. We may even venture to predict that the present century in Europe will draw its greatest sources of new knowledge from India and the East in all the matters pertaining to the human soul. If this proves to be true, the reason will be, not that Greece is ever to be challenged afresh in her own sphere, but rather because, along with the growth of the conception of human personality, and of the universe as pervaded by one divine spiritual life, we shall necessarily turn away from the Greeks.

If we look along other channels that flowed into the West and helped to form the reservoir of human thought in the ancient classical world of Europe, we shall find that this limited outlook of the Greeks was not confined to them alone. It is not necessary to dwell long upon the Roman mind, with its solidly practical,

utilitarian account of the universe as a fit place to live in. That mind was obviously mundane, and the exceptions were very few indeed. A strange cross-fertilisation with the Stoicism of the Greeks produced some rare plants in this barren soil. Idealism in Marcus Aurelius is more pronounced than in any other ancient, since the days of Plato. We note the exception, but it only proves the rule of the essential Roman limitation of spiritual vision and their concentration on secular affairs.

We come to a more debatable area, when we consider the Jews, as they entered into the life of the Roman Empire. In spite of much in the Old Testament, which clearly passes into the unseen, we are learning afresh every day, as we examine more carefully the Jewish records, how limited, as in the case of Rome, their conceptions were. The great exceptions come here in the Prophets and the Psalms; and these have formed the spiritual nourishment of the Christian Church. But the average Jewish outlook upon life had gradually hardened into a legal ceremonial code, which shut out by a dead wall of barren morality the conception of the Infinite. The 'perfect' man, at the time of Christ, was the Jew who kept, day by day, the routine of the moral code of commandments, never swerving to the right hand or to the left. God's favour was supposed to be confined to one race, the Jewish race. This whole attitude led in its turn to an almost 'classical' tradition, if we may so use the word, which was moral rather than artistic and far less beautiful than that of the Greeks, though possessing a certain finite attractiveness of its own.

2.

The strange volcanic upheaval caused by the Christian Revolution consisted in this, that it tore away from its foundations, with a shock of tremendous explosion, this classical life of man in the Mediterranean area. For the Christian Faith started out at once on its romantic career, uprooting, destroying and obliterating like an earthquake all boundaries which man had reared up during the past ages in order to shut out the terrors of the unknown. It revelled in the unseen and the extreme, and even at times the bizarre.

An emaciated form, writhing upon a gibbet, called a Cross, shocked the artistic sensibilities of the Greek world, just as the cry of unlimited forgiveness which came from His lips in death shattered all the legal ideas of righteousness among the Jews. "We preach Christ crucified," said St. Paul, "to the Jews, a stumbling-block; to the Greeks, foolishness; but unto them which are called, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than man, and the weakness of God is stronger than man."

This was a Revolution indeed, in the midst of so much sane and settled life! Into the Roman world of law and order and security: into the Greek world of limited artistic perfection: into the Jewish world of justice based on exact requital, this strange portent came, with its transposition of all values and its unswerving gaze upon the infinite. 'The things that are seen' said St. Paul, explaining the message, 'are temporal: but the things that are unseen are eternal.' This cry from the East had reached the West in many forms before; but this time it came with the fulness of spiritual power.

There can be little doubt as to whence this new upheaval ultimately originated. It sprang from the East itself, where the unseen and the eternal had absorbed the souls of men for long ages past. Other Eastern cults had crossed the border and gained an entrance into the Mediterranean area. They had failed, but this succeeded. While it overleaped the classical limitations of the Greek, the Roman and the Jew, and appeared at first sight to represent an amazing travesty of all true proportion, revelling in exaggerations more fantastic than the Orpheus cult, which formed its most serious rival, yet it soon proved itself to possess a higher wisdom of its own which was able to meet the needs of the age and win acceptance.

Though clearly not the outcome of Judæa alone, it had its roots in the Jewish religion and absorbed the teaching of the Psalms and Prophets. While it had no intimate relation to the classical tradition of the Greeks, yet it was able to find in Plato's writings a *præpositio evangelica* and it soon began to express its own ideas of the Infinite in Plato's language. Though the Roman Empire instinctively persecuted the new faith, fearing its rival



strength, yet the Stoic outlook upon the universe, which held the minds of the greatest Romans, became appropriated by Christianity. It began, almost at once, to use the well-worn aphorisms of the Stoics just as it also used the sentences of Plato and the Hebrew Prophets.

I would wish to break off at this point and state in a parenthesis that historical criticism and research have yet to give a final answer to the questions, which have already been adumbrated in this paper,—how, for instance, Plato himself is related to the East; how far the Stoics, starting from the extreme south-eastern corner of Asia-minor, had come under the sphere of Eastern thought; how far the Christian Faith itself is an Eastern product, tracing its origin not only back to Judæa, but to India,—the home of the religions of the East. If I might venture to give my own tentative opinion, formed after many years of patient revision of thoughts and experiences and tentative conclusions, I regard it as probable that a far greater Eastern element is contained in primitive Christianity than I had previously imagined. It was not without justification that the Roman Empire regarded it as an 'Eastern Cult,' and compared it with other Eastern faiths which had advanced westward.

At first, it hardly seemed likely that a new philosophy of religion would develop out of the new experience of these early Christians. We have seen how profoundly un-Jewish that experience was, and also how un-Greek and un-Roman. The Christian doctrine of the Cross,—of suffering without limit and without retaliation, which was there vividly and immediately represented,—was repugnant to classical antiquity. We have to go to the early Buddhist Scriptures for such idealism of suffering and sacrifice, embodied in a whole society, and not merely in exceptional individuals. Therefore it had very little 'atmosphere' at first in the West: it was a thing strange and outlandish. It seemed likely to follow the course of other Oriental mysteries, which had come westward, and to appeal only to the vulgar crowd.

But two remarkable writers at a very early date fulfilled this miracle of approximation,—St. Paul and St. John. They were able, by personality and genius of the very highest order, to link

the primitive Christian thought, on the one hand to the passages in the Jewish scriptures which spoke of an infinite redeeming value in suffering itself, and on the other hand to the idealism of Plato and the Stoics. The crown of this new philosophy of life was reached in the Prologue of St. John's Gospel and in the conclusion of the same writer's Epistles, that 'God is Love.' Here is a point where religion and philosophy, ethics and metaphysics, meet and combine.

If we go back for a brief moment to the spiritual thoughts of the East that were prevalent in religion outside the Mediterranean area before the birth of Christ, we shall find the same conception of the Divine Nature as ultimately 'Love' developed slowly by human experience. It was faintly outlined in that most precious age of religious thought, the Upanishad period, which had declared: *He manifests His immortal form as Joy*, --where the word 'Joy' contains much of the context of the word 'Love' as used by St. John. But it is in the early Buddhist, and in the Jain, doctrine of Ahimsa, that the teaching is made fruitful in practical life. The phrase, "The crown of all religion is Ahimsa" is indeed a great landmark in the religious history of the human race. This doctrine of Ahimsa, to a remarkable degree, ran a parallel course to that conception of Love in Christianity, which "suffereth long and is kind, envieth not, vaunteth not itself, thinketh no evil"; it has not yet reached its limits, as we can see in new religious movements in India to-day.

The sudden impact of the Christian Revolution on the West, which carried with it some of the atmosphere of Eastern mystical religion, resulted in a remarkable revival of Platonism under Porphyry and Plotinus at Alexandria. This Neo-Platonism, as it was called, was to affect profoundly the later history of human thought. It left a deep mark upon Christianity itself.

Before Neo-Platonism arose, the direct touch with India had been well-established by the Christian Church. Pantænus and Origen, two of the Greek Fathers, had each of them obtained definite knowledge and experience about India. Pantænus left the highest academic position in Alexandria to visit India in person. He brought back manuscripts and also records of Christians who had already settled there. This was before the

end of the second century A.D. Therefore it is not unlikely that the Neo-Platonists, in their turn, were constantly in touch with the spiritual teaching of the East and drew largely from it in their mystical religious teaching.

It is a strangely pathetic and lonely figure,—St. Augustine,—which closes this chapter of classical antiquity, as it yielded stubbornly but inevitably to the Christian Faith. Torn by repentance and doubt, exalted by hope and faith and love, himself one of the tenderest souls that ever breathed, standing out above the wreckage of the classical age, he gave to the West, more than any other single man, those central terms of its new religious philosophy which still remain paramount in the modern age. In his search after God, he sought also to fathom the infinite depths of human personality and to find there a true reflection of the divine. In this ardent mystical quest, by a singularly different route, but all the while aiming to reach the same goal, he comes nearest of all to Plotinus.

This intuitive vision of the Infinite carries us on the one hand back to the profound thinkers of the East and, on the other, forward to much of the new psychology of this modern age. His ardent and passionate longing for the presence of God in the soul which could never be satisfied with the perfection of this present world, shows us how far we have travelled from the antique classical finite aim of the Greeks and Romans. He stands at the portal of those realms of Christian romance, which were the dream of the Middle Ages—those ‘Ages of Faith’ in Europe, wherein myth and legend made up the daily life and experience of vast masses of mankind, and the solid earth, with its attractions of the flesh, was left far behind by multitudes in the search for the Holy Grail and the Divine Bliss.

### 3.

Following out, very rapidly indeed, the course of these Ages of Faith, as they affect our present subject, we find how, in the midst of much that was formal and crude and literal and coarse in spiritual texture, there were in every generation tender and refined souls who sought to follow St. Augustine along the

mystical way, and to sound the depths of the human spirit in its search for God, approaching with awe and wonder the infinite ideal. They climbed painfully but triumphantly the ascent which they learnt to call the *Scala Perfectionis*,—the steep pathway or stair-case of the soul, which led to the Beatific Vision. The “purgation” with which it began, led on to “illumination”, and lastly to “union” in which it found its goal.

Their search for inward truth led them, also, like St. Augustine before them, to enter the inner depths of their own personality and to seek out the soul’s direct relation to the universe and God. St. Benedict, St. Barnard, Abelard, St. Francis, Dante, Thomas à Kempis, each of these in varying degree and mode represents during these “Ages of Faith” this passionate search for infinite truth. Not seldom they neglect and despise the intellectual light altogether and fail to realise its vital purpose as a true guide to the soul. But deep down in the consciousness of man a new range of human thought was being examined and explored. We, in this modern age, are now seeking to gather in the treasure, which they have left behind. When we compare it with the mysticism of the East, we discover a new and beautiful kinship. It is perhaps the age when the West most nearly approached the East in the realm of spiritual thought.

Amid all this that was pointing to higher regions of the spirit yet unreached, there was another side in these Middle Ages of Europe which led to a reaction: for there was a flaw at the base of Christianity itself as conceived in the West. The romantic element in the Christian Faith, as we have seen, could not arrive at any compromise with the ancient classical world.

The artistic proportion of the Greeks, which had given an external unity to matter and spirit, soul and form, broke up before the new intensive moral idealism of the Christian Faith, that knew no limit to the powers of sacrifice and devotion and counted all the world as dross that it might win Christ. At the same time, this Christian ideal itself went to excess and extravagance. It raised more difficulties than it could by its own power resolve. Deep down in its very inmost structure, as we see from St. Paul’s Epistles, there was a perpetual conflict

between matter and spirit, unresolved and seemingly unresolvable, a dualism that was profound. Throughout the Middle Ages, this war between the soul and the flesh was carried on with an unrelenting zeal. It gave rise to dogmas, which made havoc of sane thinking, and led to abnormalities and excesses which rendered impossible the healthy intellectual growth of mankind.

#### 4.

The thinking mind of Europe could, in the end, no longer bear the strain of this fantastic idealism; this perpetual other-worldly outlook which never reached the truth. It swung back, on the full tide of the Classical Renaissance, to the frank acceptance of the mundane standard of values, and of the finite classical conception of virtue, as engaged only with the present earthly existence, leaving the future as unknown. The romantic element was freely thrown aside. Men determined to obey priests and popes no longer. They prepared to live in the present, enjoy the present, and be pagan in their outlook once more. Even cardinals and popes themselves joined in the reaction, when it reached its highest flood point, sweeping away all the great landmarks of the Middle Ages in Church and State alike.

In one sense, the Modern Age of Europe, which followed upon the Medieval Age, has meant a return to realism and a weakening of the idealist outlook upon life. The earlier discoveries of modern science have been made by the concentration of the human mind upon reason and experiment, and the abandonment of the pathway of direct intuition as a source of knowledge. Thus, in more senses than one, a revival of the classics has taken place. In all this process, there can be little doubt that the West has drifted further and further away from its spiritual basis in the unseen.

Yet even in the West, the romantic element had not been altogether left behind during the Age of Reason, which followed the Classical Renaissance. In the Eighteenth Century, it gave birth to the enthusiastic movement known as the Evangelical Revival, which brought into the homes of the poorest a mystical

faith, transforming and purifying in its effects. George Fox and the Society of Friends represented another range of mystical religious thought and life. In Germany, also, there dawned a new illumination, that eagerly availed itself of every ray of light from the East, and began once more to follow the pathway of intuition as a means to attain truth. Philosophy, with due reverence, was set up boldly upon its throne; and renewed search into unexplored regions of the human mind brought fresh facts and experiences to light.

In the Nineteenth Century the Modern Age of Science began. The Christian Church, which had bound itself hard and fast with irrational dogmas and creeds, could not at first cut itself loose, and make the fearless appeal of free mystical religion to every faculty of man to join in the search for truth. A fatal conflict went on, all through the century, between intellect and faith. Science became more and more abstracted from religion, and philosophy took the same precipitous course. While great gains have been achieved in certain directions by such abstractions, great losses have also ensued. The wholeness of life has been lost sight of, and humanity itself has been divided into compartments.

The conception of the universe in Europe, governed by the postulates of science, has tended to become rather that of an infinite series and a never-ceasing flux, than that of a spiritual ideal being realised under conditions of space and time. The imagination of the modern man is taught by science to picture the crash of systems and the wreck of worlds in an endless sequence. The infinitely great and the infinitely small in nature have been revealed to man's naked gaze as never before, but the mind and the spirit find no rest in all these bewildering discoveries. Modern men frequently retire from them, jaded and worn, to the limited ideal of ancient Greece, and say: "Let us leave the infinite alone; it can never be fathomed. Let us perfect that which we know and beautify the world in which we live."

The new age still gropes for that spiritual vision of the Infinite which is satisfying, not terrifying and morbid; that vision which alone can unify the world. But as yet there has not

been fashioned in the West any such comprehensive philosophy, as will meet the true demands of religion and science alike, and bring a new unity to mankind.

In the present turmoil and confusion in Europe after the Great War, which shook the confidence and pride of the West, there are very many earnest souls who are looking more and more wistfully to the East. They seek to discover whether the harmony between religion and science on the one hand, and science and philosophy on the other, may not be found in that eastern quarter of the globe which has hitherto been for the most part outside the field of European research.

Already, the resources of the classical West, as we have seen, have been examined, and tried again and again, and found wanting. The Christian Faith has also been tried with varying success. And in recent years it has been found too tightly bound by ecclesiastical dogmas to give any prospect that it will suddenly unloose itself and come forth with new strength unfettered for the great task that lies before us. Therefore, man's thoughts are travelling elsewhere, and the culture and civilisation of the world are seen to be far vaster than European insularity ever deemed.

One thing is practically certain. The old isolation of the different cultures and religions of the world, which was originally in a great measure geographical, is now rapidly vanishing away. The different currents of thought and life among the races of mankind have to be made to flow into one another in the future. Channels of intercommunication must be cut. The romantic and idealistic element, which is still strong in the religions of the East, must be brought into closer contact with the classical and realistic element, which came back to modern Europe with the Renaissance and has dominated European thought ever since. Only thus can the spiritual conception of the Universe, which is innate in the consciousness of mankind, in East and West alike, find its true setting and its full expression.

## THE EAST IS MY LOVE.

The East is my love.

I have taken her to dwell in my wild, throbbing heart, for *there* is sanctuary.  
There she has her throne, built up of golden thoughts and sacred memories,  
And studded with bright gems of kindly deeds

\* \* \*

My love brings sadness in her train

She is so beautiful, with that perfected beauty which is born  
Of inner holiness and unsmirched mind :

As though the radiance of her God-given soul had pierced the armour  
of her outer being

To dwell for ever in her lovely face.

Her dewy eyes are as the depths of unknown seas,

Her wine-hued mouth is pregnant with great utterances,

Her night-black hair is as a silken mantle

To hide her perfect form from alien view.

And from her sauness springs an untold joy, the joy of faith  
and spiritual dreams,

For those who dwell not in the glare of stark modernity's soul-blinding light.

The feebleness of little words betrays me, when I would most give  
eloquence its vent

In praising of my love.

I cannot preach Forgetfulness of Self, who am so full of Self

In calling her my love.

Yet would I have her loved by all the world, enshrined in ev'ry heart,

The beacon-ray of ev'ry lonely soul, the spirit-guiding influence,  
that tempers

Humanity grown callous and debauched.

\* \* \*

The East is my love.

I have taken her to dwell in my wild, throbbing heart,

And none shall penetrate this secret dwelling-place,

Save those only who love her as myself.

No hand shall wrench us twain apart, my love and I.

For we are One in endless unity with God.

Gwendoline Goodwin. (*Saki*).



## SIKH IDEALS.

*By* PROF. K. M. PANIKKAR.

Though Sikhism is essentially a product of Hindu culture, yet, as religion, it affirms certain important principles which are not indeed incompatible with Hinduism, but are generally considered to be against Hindu practice. The Sikhs are strong monotheists and no Sikh may believe in a plurality of gods. Again the Sikh social structure contemplates no caste system, though by association with Hinduism caste has come to be a factor as much among the Sikhs as among other Hindu sects. The Sikhs worship no idols, their Gurudwaras being merely temples where the Granth Sahib is regularly read.

Sikhism, in fact, is a simple religion with but few dogmas and no complicated theology. Like Buddhism it is a religion which puts the greatest emphasis on good and upright conduct and not on faiths and beliefs.

Truth is the highest of all virtues, but true life is even higher.

I have consulted the four Vedas, but those writings find not God's limits.

I have consulted the four books of the Muhammadans but all God's work is not described in them.

And I, Nanak, say man shall be true to his faith if he fears God and does good works.

Thus says Nanak; and, unlike Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, the simple principles preached by him have not so far been thickly overlaid by a tangle of wild metaphysical speculation. Probably the shortness of the period during which Sikhism has had independent existence,—between the death of Guru Govind Singh and now there have elapsed only two centuries,—accounts for this. The rustic hardihood of the Jats, from whom the Sikhs have been mainly recruited, had perhaps also its share in keeping the religion of Guru Govind a simple faith with no formularies and rituals.

Whatever the reason, one of the chief features of Sikhism is, that it is a religion without a priesthood, without a theology and

to a large extent without a philosophy of its own. The philosophical background of Sikhism is entirely Hindu. It accepts all the distinctive thought of the Vedānta, not only in its monotheism but in the idea of *Karma*, *Máyá*, and the unknowableness of the Godhead. Salvation is accepted as *Nirvāna*, freedom from re-birth, and the idea of transmigration is at the very root of Sikh religion. In the Japji itself—the daily prayerbook of the Sikhs—there are many direct allusions to this :

By His orders some obtain Nirvana : by His orders others must ever wander in transmigration.

They who are outside Thy favour find no entrance and wander in many births.

Again the idea of *Karma*, as being the one supreme test, is of the very essence of Sikhism : “Bear, O my soul, the result of thine own acts”, says Nanak.

It is clear enough on examination that, though the independence of Sikhism as a religion is undeniable, its whole philosophy is based on orthodox Hindu thought. More than this, the Sikhs accept as a whole the main traditions of Hindu mythology. In the Japji appears the following passage :

One *Máyá* in union with God gave birth to three acceptable children. One of them is the Creator, the second is the Provider, the third performeth the function of the Destroyer.

Guru Govind Singh himself translated *Devi Māhātmyam* and incorporated it in the *Granth Sahib*. The destruction of the various demons by the *Devi* is still a portion of the Sikh sacred books. The whole *Granth Sahib*, in each of its successive stages, shows distinct and unmistakable evidence of being Hindu in thought, expression and out-look.

But there is one important point on which the first Guru as well as his successors differed fundamentally from the other religious reformers and thinkers of Hindu India. Their spirit was essentially modern. The scholasticism of the mediæval *Achāryas* with its wearying arguments and interpretations of texts does not touch them.

Guru Nanak treated Hindu tradition just as would a modern educated Hindu who is pious and religious but at the same time

endowed with a critical attitude of mind. He accepted the traditional setting for his thought, used the same categories and to a large extent borrowed even the same phraseology, but he transformed the whole by a new out-look.

Nanak's relation to the main current of Indian philosophic thought and tradition is almost the same as of the whole succession of devotional poets from Kabir to Tagore, and the astonishing similarity between the hymns of the first Guru and the best passages in Gitanjali would be noticed even by a casual reader. Here is an example :

What attributes of thine Oh Lord shall I blazon abroad?  
I cannot even attain one of thy many excellences;  
I am ever a sacrifice unto thee.  
Gold, silver, pearls, rubies which gladden the heart  
These things the Bridegroom hath given me,  
And I have fixed my heart on them.  
I had palaces of brick fashioned with marble,—  
In these luxuries I forgot the Bridegroom and sat not near Him.

Guru Nanak was eminently a poet and, like all founders of religion, he was concerned more with the realisation by his disciples of certain great truths than with the acceptance of rituals, formulas, or other practices of priest-craft. He did not assume the function or attitude of the lawgiver.

Nanak was purely a philosopher or mystic and not a political or social leader, there differing from the Prophet of Arabia whose three cardinal principles—the repudiation of image worship, the acceptance of the principle of monotheism and the universal brotherhood of man are all accepted by the first Sikh Guru. Muhammad was also a law giver. He laid down the law for the Muslims in all matters affecting this world. Nanak was content with simply teaching the truths of his religion and he left his disciples socially within the fold of the Hindu community.

The Sikh lawgiver—the priest who combined the functions of the prince, like, Muhammad, Hildebrand and Calvin—was

Guru Govind Singh who gave the social shape of a distinct community to the followers of the Nanak Panth and thus preserved their identity from being sunk in the vastness of Hindu sects and creeds.

The principle that Nanak taught was mainly that *there is only one God*, Akál Purukh\*, (which means the eternal being) whose qualities cannot be known or defined by human understanding.

The true one was in the beginning

The true one was in the primal age

The true one is now also.

O Nanak, the true one also shall be.

Man can realise Him only by acting according to divine pleasure when the grace of God will descend on him. He is to be worshipped by meditation on His greatness but not by outward forms or by images. Nanak and the Gurus set themselves definitely against image worship.

Surrender to the will of God should be the only ideal of man in life. All his activities should be directed towards the discovering of God's will.

How shall man become true before God? How shall the veil of  
falsehood be rent?  
By walking, O Nanak, according to the will of the Commander  
as pre-ordained.

Again :

Without God's grace she obtaineth nothing, howsoever she may strive,  
Go and ask the happy wives by what means they obtained their Spouse.  
"Whatever He doeth accept as good : have done with cleverness and orders.  
Apply thy mind to the worship of His feet by whose love what is  
most desired is obtained  
Do whatever the Bridegroom biddeth thee, give Him thy body and soul :  
such perfumes apply"  
Thus speak the happy wives, by these means the Spouse is obtained.  
Efface thyself, so shalt thou obtain the Bridegroom, what other art is there?

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\*The Sanskrit *sh* becomes *kh* in Gurmukhi. Thus *Rishi* is written and pronounced *Rikhi*.

Again :

He to whom the Lord is compassionate and merciful will do the  
Master's work.  
 That worshipper whom God causeth to abide by His order will  
worship Him.  
 By obeying His order man is acceptable and shall then reach his  
Master's court.  
 He shall act as pleaseth his master and obtain the fruit his heart desireth.

Unquestioning submission to God's will is the way to perfection and salvation. The only way of understanding the will of God and of deserving the Divine grace is by good acts. This is the central teaching of Nanak. Unless a man conducts himself according to the paths of righteousness he will not attain salvation howsoever much be his faith and whatever outward formularies he may perform. Good conduct together with humility and love of God alone can give a man *moksha* (salvation).

The bar-maid is misery, wine is lust, man is the drinker  
 The cup filled with worldly love is wrath, and it is served by pride  
 The company is false and covetous, ruined by excess of drink  
 Make thou, instead, good conduct thy yeast, truth thy molasses  
God's name thy wine  
 Make merit thy cakes, good conduct thy clarified butter and modesty  
thy meal to eat.  
 Such, O Nanak, are obtained by the Guru's favour; by partaking of  
them sins depart.  
 Even though a man go barefooted he must still suffer for his own acts  
 There is no devotion without virtue. Good conduct alone is the test.

Again :

Make thy mind the ploughman, good acts thy cultivation,  
 Modesty thy irrigation and water  
 And thy body the field to till.

Thus all through the hymns this idea of right action and conduct comes back as the true principle taught by the Guru, whereby alone salvation can be obtained.

Nanak never accepted the differences of caste, though being a religious teacher and not a lawgiver he laid down no rules, Said he :

Caste has no power in the next world, where there is a new order of being. They whose accounts (actions in this world) are honoured are the good.

Again :

Nanak is with those who are low born, among the lowly, nay among the lowest of the low.

He refused the *upanayana* ceremony and declared that the only sacred thread worth wearing was that which was made of the cotton of mercy with contentment as its thread and continence its knots, which would make a *janeu* for the soul. By adoring and praising the Name, honour and a true thread are obtained.

The Guru converted men irrespective of creed or caste and his chief *chela*, Mardana, was a Musalman. But it is interesting to note that, while the Guru disapproved of the false divisions of caste based on heredity and not on conduct, he did not declare himself against social divisions. When Mardana died the Guru declared with reference to the ceremony of his burial that "since he knew God he was a Brahmin". Nevertheless Caste continued, and to some extent still continues, to exist in Sikhism.

The religious, social and political ideals of Sikhism as founded by Guru Nanak underwent a profound change under his successors. The religion of Nanak was a mystic quietism believing in one God who was to be known by devotion and pleased by good works and humility. And the Guru was tolerant alike of Hindus and Muslims. But gradually they developed a social polity and, by the time of Govind Singh, the Sikhs became an organised commonwealth having a definite political out-look.

The later Gurus were more statesmen than religious teachers, and except for Govind Singh, who combined in himself, like

Muhammad, the gifts of a prophet with those of a prince and legislator, they were not the originators of a conscious policy.

Govind Singh following the tradition set by Har Govind changed the quietism of Nanak into an aggressive faith. While Nanak had taught : "fight with no weapon save the word of God a holy teacher hath no means save the purity of his doctrine," Govind Singh insisted that every member of his commonwealth should bear *kirpan* and call himself Singh or lion. He gave to war great dignity as a profession and declared that those who died on the battlefield would attain glory and heaven. The very fact that he included Devi Mâhâtmya in the Granth Sahib shows that the pious and mystic sect of Nanak had been transformed beyond recognition.

The administration of the *Pahul* (Sikh baptism), the insistence on outward symbols, the origination of the idea of the Khalsa in the whole body of which the spirit of the Guru was to reside after him,—these, and not the teachings of Nanak, tended to keep the Sikhs from merging themselves within the generous expanse of Hinduism.

Govind Singh cut off all connexion with the dissenters and from that time all approximation to Hinduism has been successfully resisted by his puritan followers who from time to time arose to restore the Khalsa to its exclusiveness.

## SIKSHA-SATRA,

*A Home School for Orphans.*

By L. K. ELMHIRST.

The Sikshá-Satra is the natural outcome of some years of educational experiment at Santiniketan and of two years experience at the Institute of Rural Reconstruction at Sriniketan. The principles upon which it is based are little more than common sense deductions from the failures and successes of the past.

It is in their simplicity, in their capacity to grow, and in a certain native frankness that the charm of children chiefly lies. Untrammelled by tradition, driven forward by inherent instinct, they carry on their own research in the field of life, gathering knowledge from experience with an abounding joy that is rarely exceeded later.

With the young of domestic animals we notice in its simplest form this care-free exuberance, this capacity to treat life as a perpetual game and the world as a fairy make-believe, in which, for the kitten everything that moves is a potential mouse, and for the puppy no household article comes amiss so long as in the softness of its nature it may represent some rat to be worried. There exists apparently some driving force within, impelling growth along certain lines, yet ever seeking to direct the arduous gathering of experience towards self-preservation, with an overflow of life-energy in what seems to the adult to be the reckless joy-ride of youth.

With the growing tree, too, there is the same kind of exuberance in the joyful pushing upward of the young shoot. Such is the whirl of life packed within the tip of this first tender outgrowth, that cell is added to cell with an amazing rapidity whilst the food supply that has been packed away in the mother seed remains unexhausted. Even when this supply is gone, the growing point still finds its own natural way up and out into the open air, and woe be to the tree of the future if some accident befalls and damage is done to that first shoot. Other branches



may develope and try to replace the lead that has gone, but some driving force, some urgent desire to seek for life and growth will have gone too.

There is something of this same quality in the human child, and in the same way it is not difficult to inflict upon the child, as on the young tree, or upon the young animal, permanent damage by means of unnatural repression. The playtime of young life is not an unmeaning thing. It is intimately associated with the demands of a strenuous future, even though for the time being some of the worries of self-preservation may be borne by the parent.

We are too apt to forget this with our children. We prefer to provide them with a children's toy-world, lacking the imagination to remember that, even if it was make-believe, it was always a grown-up world that we chiefly craved as the plaything of our early days. To dig our own cave in the earth, where we could creep out of sight, much to the disgust of the matter-of-fact gardener, to chop sticks with a real axe, to be given a pair of boots to polish, a fire to light, or some dough to knead and bake—these were ever our keenest joys; yet only too often had we to be content with toy bricks, toy houses, toy tools or toy kitchens; or, if serious work was provided, it was in the nature of sweated labour, which fatigued without giving play to our creative instincts.

The aim, then, of the Sikshá-Satra is, through experience in dealing with this overflowing abundance of child life, its charm and its simplicity, to provide the utmost liberty within surroundings that are filled with creative possibilities, with opportunities for the joy of play that is work,—the work of exploration; and of work that is play,—the reaping of a succession of novel experiences; to give the child that freedom of growth which the young tree demands for its tender shoot, that field for self-expansion in which all young life finds both training and happiness.

It is between the ages of six and twelve that the growing child is most absorbed in gathering impressions through sight, smell, hearing and taste but more especially through touch and the use of the hands. From the start, therefore, the child enters

the Sikshá-Satra as an apprentice in handicraft as well as housecraft. In the workshop, as a trained producer and as a potential creator, it will acquire skill and win freedom for its hands; whilst as an inmate of the house, which it helps to construct and furnish and maintain, it will gain expanse of spirit and win freedom as a citizen of the small community.

Only after it has stored up a certain amount of experience in these different fields, will the child begin to feel a need for their co-ordination, and therefore for the time to record, to relate, to dramatise and to synthesise the discoveries of the senses. Until the child has had intimate touch with the facts and demands of life, it is surely unfair to demand long hours of concentrated attention upon second-hand facts and figures wholly unconnected with anything it has hitherto encountered and taken note of in real life.

There is a certain Fami School in the Philippine Islands where some three hundred boys own and work their own little holdings, build their own cottages, keep their own accounts, run their own municipality, tend their own livestock, and pocket their own profits. "All of our classroom work is in the nature of round-table discussions of stored-up experience, except the teaching of English," said the principal; "and because we are using a standardised course wholly unrelated with their own life, their English classes are lifeless too, and I cannot arouse interest in them."

Under the term housecraft, at the Sikshá-Satra, the following functions will be treated as of primary educational importance :—

Care and cleaning and construction of Quarters.

Care and proper use of latrines; sanitary disposal of waste

Cooking and serving of food; Clothes washing and repair.

Personal hygiene and healthy habits.

Individual self-discipline; group self-government.

Policing and hospitality; Fire drill and control.

In everyone of these, there is some art to be mastered, some business or organising capacity to be developed, some law of science to be recognised, and in all of them there is a call for the recognition of the need for individual self-preservation as well

as of the duties, responsibilities and privileges of family membership and citizenship.

Much of what is termed housecraft is in the nature of handicraft, but, from the earliest years, it is well to introduce to the children some special craft, easily grasped by small hands, which is of definite economic value. The product should be of real use in the home, or have a ready sale outside, and thus enable the child to realise his capacity for self-preservation through the trained experience of his hands.

Any of the following can easily be mastered in a few weeks :

Cotton wick, tape and band making ; Scarf weaving and belt making ;

Cotton rug and durree making (the looms can easily be made by the children themselves, out of bamboo) .

Straw-sandal making. Straw-mat and mattress making.

Sewing ; Paper making ; Ink making.

Dyeing with simple vegetable dyes ; Cotton and calico printing with wood blocks.

Making sun-dried mud bricks.

For elder boys and girls the following are suitable :

Wool work, shearing, washing, carding, dyeing and coarse blanket weaving. Knitting, darning.

Pottery ; Carpentry and carving Smithy and tool making.

Building with sun-dried bricks ; Rush and mud construction, bamboo construction ; Thatching.

Tailoring and use of sewing machine.

Watch and Clock repair.

Cycle cleaning and repair.

Block making, typesetting, printing, typing and duplicating.

Musical instrument making (Drums, flutes, one stringed instruments).

Food preparation ; Wheat and grain grinding ; Oil extraction ; Sap extraction ; Soap making.

In the carrying out of everyone of these crafts, again, some art, some science some element of business enters in. Anyone of these crafts may offer an avenue of approach to the ultimate high road of self preservation and to self-confidence in his or her own capacity to achieve economic stability in the future. With-

cut such feeling of confidence in the power to face the fight for livelihood through the skill of trained fingers and hands, it is impossible to achieve that freedom of spirit upon which the fullest enjoyment of life is dependant.

There are few of the crafts mentioned above which are not in some way intimately bound up with the life of the country-folk. With each of them there is a grammar of procedure which has to be learnt, but it is a grammar which is not detached from life and which has to be learnt at the beginning by trial and error and the bitterness of failure. There are always dry bones of some kind behind the finished product of any skilled craft; and so often, especially in the class-room, is the original product forgotten together with the atmosphere which gave rise to it, and only these dry bones left.

Of all workshops the one provided by nature herself is the most commodious and helpful. Under skilled stimulation and guidance there is out-of-doors an unlimited field for experiencing and for experimenting with life. The schoolmaster here is an anachronism. He can no longer tower over his pupils from his rostrum and threaten them with his power to grant or withhold marks and certificates. He is forced to adopt his rightful place behind the student, ever on the watch, ever ready with a word of advice or encouragement, ever ready to be a student himself, but never in the way. Nature herself is the best schoolmaster and rewards the student according to his capacity and powers of observation. The teacher fails here when his student fails, and can no longer lay the failure of his pupil at the door of some inherent incapacity.

The following out-door crafts can be learnt and practised by small children, and yet be of economic benefit and have their intimate contact with life, their definite utility to the family or group :

Poultry keeping, and chicken rearing for egg-production.

Care of fuel and water supply.

Seed-bed preparation, manuring, and planting.

Cultivation of flowers and vegetables.

Drainage and Irrigation ; Wood-cutting and Jungle clearing.

As the capacity of the child grows and his experience enlarges, there will come at a later stage a natural demand for that grammar of his art upon which depends more accurate observation, more precise inference, more fruitful knowledge, as well as a desire for communion with fellow-workers in the same field whose experiences and thoughts, whose struggles and successes are stored up in books,—not in such case task-books to drudge over, but helpmates and friends carrying them out into newer and wider fields of human knowledge.

Already the Indian village boy is accustomed to take his part in the duties and privileges of family life, the herding of the cows, the watering and feeding of them. The inclusion of a small garden within his home compound, properly supervised, provides an ample basis for the widest and best form of education by experience. So in the Sikshá-Satra it is the individual plot of ground which will be for both boys and girls the basis of much of their reading, of their writing and of most of their arithmetic.

From the first the child should feel that this plot is playground as well as experimental farm, where it will try its own experiments as well as carry out the planting, tending and harvesting of some definitely profitable crop. Under such a system, text books, class-room and formal laboratory go by the board. There remain the garden plot, the potting shed, and the workshop. Records are kept and reports and accounts written up, revised and corrected, giving scope for *literary training* in its most interesting form. *Geology* becomes the study of the fertility of the plot; *chemistry* the use of lime and manures of all kinds, of sprays and disinfectants; *physics* the use of tools, of pumps, the study of water-lifts and oil-engines; *entomology* the control of plant pests (ants, caterpillars, beetles) and diseases (leaf curl, wilt and bacterial attacks); *ornithology* the study of birds in their relation first to the garden plot and then to the world in general.

There is no room in the Sikshá-Satra for Nature-Study as an abstract subject, divorced from life and the needs of life by boards of education which sit in cities and recommend questionnaires and examinations to suit their prescribed text books, with rewards to suit the examination results. In life the

child has to face the mosquito nightly, perhaps the bug, or the flea, the bacteria of typhoid, of cholera and small-pox, as well as the forces of nature which attack his trees, his plants and his live stock. Nature study is thus transformed into the study of Nature in relation to life and the daily experiences of life.

Almost unwittingly we have wandered into the field of human service and of citizenship, with its privileges and its responsibility for human welfare. By a little practical training and experience seventy-five per cent. of the ill-health of rural India could be eliminated within a few months through the activity of the children. Such is their willingness to absorb by experience, to experiment and to learn from hard facts, that the children become the natural and immediate agents in the education of the adults, who by the very responsibilities of their position as bread-winners or house-workers are precluded from launching out into a world of adventure in experiment and who have in all probability lost, through years of struggle and drudgery, that initial equipment without which experiment is impossible,—a fruitful imagination.

It is in fact, through the children in our own neighbourhood, that new life and hope have flooded the villages, which had been lost for two generations past in a slough of despair. We left the village pundit to carry on his drilling in the three Rs, the pupils chained to unnatural benches, and at the mercy of his jailor's arm. They needed first aid, and with that we gained the trust of the parents: the boys revelled with us in our simple games and thus their own devotion was won.

Out of the fruitless attempt of the unorganised adults to stem a village fire, came the training of the boys as a Fire Brigade and with it drill, discipline, and a sense of the utility of immediate obedience to a leader in case of emergency. Ninety per cent. of the village was attacked with malaria, but through this need of life came the mapping of the village, its tanks, its dwellings, its pits and its drains, and then the digging of water channels,—geography in fact with a vengeance. Not chemistry, not zoology, not bacteriology, not physiology,—but the study of anopheles, the kerosining of tanks, the disinfection of wells, the registration of fever cases and the keeping of health records.

There was a local fair to be policed without cost, and our boys, many of them not more than children, took over the responsibility. There were latrines to be dug and visited regularly, carts to be parked, the water reservoir to be guarded and the whole area to be cleaned up every morning. There were calls for first aid, for sympathy and kindness, for observation and watchfulness, and in the supervisor for perpetual attention, for a keeping himself in the background, for stimulation and encouragement. Out of this grew a movement of the young men in the neighbourhood to take over the responsibility for the watch and ward of their own village, so that funds might be obtained for more and more ambitious experiments in the realms of health, education and civic enterprise.

Lack of fresh vegetables and the insanitary wastage of manure, opened the way for home gardening and the initiation of small garden plots within the home courtyard. Attempts to introduce new crops among the adults had failed because only the worst farmers, who could not succeed anyhow, toyed with the novelties held out to them, whilst the best farmers waited to watch the results. On the other hand, if the boys failed, the parents did not take it seriously because, after all, they were boys. If they succeeded there was a tendency to follow their example. Through such avenues a road to new health, new life, and a new freedom has been opened, and this by the children themselves.

From the workshop to the garden, from the garden to the field and the farm, and from the farm into the neighbourhood, and so through the Excursion, the Pilgrimage and the Camping Trip, out into the wider field of life. Here for instance, within but two miles of us, are all kinds of activities going on, intimately related to our daily existence, which we tend to take for granted and therefore to leave out of our educational programme :

The Post Office and Telegraph system.

The Police Station, and local Gaol.

The Law Court, and Local Dispensary.

The Station and Goods Yard.

The Rice and Oil Mills.

The Brick Yard.

The Smithy and Wheelwright.

The Carpentry and Timber-yard.

The Potter the Copper-smith and the Brass-smith.

The Home Weaving Industry.

The Watch-maker and Jeweller.

The Shoemaker and the Tailor.

In each of these there is an art, a science and some element of business. There are tools to be mastered and men to be handled. Each calling opens up a wide horizon for the stimulation of the imagination, for emulation in embryo, for composition and dramatisation and even for more serious apprenticeship in the future. It is only through familiarity and experiment with the existing methods of policing, punishment and discipline, that we are ever going to find some simple path out of the existing maze of law, chained as it is to outworn tradition and precedent, and the Home-School is the proper and natural place for such experiments to be carried out under careful guidance and stimulation.

To try and build up an institution for its own sake only results in cutting off the children from life. If education means anything it must surely include the provision of means for experiencing every phase of adult life in embryo form. The school must be a laboratory not merely for absorbing knowledge, or for producing sheltered hot-house growth, but for giving out, for adventure into the realm of practical economics and self-preservation, of self-discipline and self-government, of self-expression in the world of spiritual abstraction and human welfare.

To omit this function of neighbourly service is to deprive the child of one of the greatest privileges of the home, where certain service is taken or granted, and already too many schools exist for the depriving of children of the privilege of helping themselves or their fellows and for the encouragement of an unnatural spirit of competition. It is in fact, just out of such self-centred institutions, concerned primarily with their own success in scholarship or games, their own wealth in numbers of students or size of buildings, and run in competition with neighbouring institutions burdened with similar obsessions, that arises



~~that spirit of sectarianism, of similar obsessions, that arises that~~  
spirit of sectarianism, of nationalism, of selfish individualism and self-assertion which produces in the world the most insidious form of dissension and spiritual blindness.

The Home School, through its extension side, is brought instantly into touch with life. Meteorology becomes the study of the weather in its relation to crop production, and history the examination of date collected in the neighbourhood concerning local industries and crafts, customs and religious expression, traditions of music and drama, but especially concerning forms of social organisation and of that co-operative enterprise which is so slow of growth and yet so significant for progress in the future. Only on such a basis is it likely that a Renaissance of the countryside will come, not at the expense of the past, but firmly based upon all the wealth of previous experience and in association for a common end.

Once kindle the dry relics of the past, rapidly disintegrating today under the influence of new forces and agencies which have caught this ancient civilisation unawares ; once fire the enthusiasm, the will-to-experiment of youth, and the new day will dawn.

So much of our education in the past has disregarded the fundamental law of nature, the cycle of life. Where nature is ever shortening the weaning time of the developing organism, we insist upon extending it indefinitely, through school-days and college. From the moment the mother-supply, in seed or egg, is exhausted, down must go the roots, searching and experimenting, up must go the young stalk and spread its leaves into the sky, or the young chick venture out alone in search of its own food. From the first also, in nature, there is a giving up, a pouring out, in preparation for the time when the organism will devote its whole energy to some great act of self-sacrifice, some service on behalf of its own kind, the result of which may bear no direct benefit to itself.

We do not claim that the Home School should be self-supporting from the start. That would be a desecration of Nature's own law. But this is no reason for depriving the child of the privilege of working for his own self-support, so far as his ability allows, taking into full account his need for physical,

mental and moral growth and enjoyment. So long as the motto of the Home School is "Freedom for Growth", there need be no fear that the powers of the children will be overtaxed.

Freedom for growth, experiment, enterprise and adventure, all are dependant upon Imagination, that greatest of gifts, that function of the mind upon which all progress depends. To release the Imagination, to give it wings, to "open wide the mind's caged door," this is the most vital service that it is in the power of one human being to render to another, and one to which the Superintendent of the *Sikshá-Satra* must pay constant and undivided attention. It is this gift of imaginative power which distinguishes man so markedly from the eating, preying, procreating animal, and which like the lamp of Aladdin endows him with the power to create a new world for himself after his own fashion.

Of all conflicts in the field of education, that between Imagination and Discipline is the most bitter and prolonged. On the one side stands the child, relieved so often of all responsibility for his own self-preservation, of the worries that accompany the winning of a livelihood, craving the fullest freedom to satisfy the fertile imaginings of his brain, imaginings which like tender plants can so easily be crushed and mutilated, revolting against the bonds of what seems so often an unreasoned discipline, and on the whole much preferring the rule of a simple anarchy, which means no rule at all. On the other side stand the parent and schoolmaster,—practical people of the world, with full experience of its toil and hardship, lovers of law and order, of routine and the common place, because they represent the known in the struggle for life, their imagination long ago crushed out in the struggle for practical ends,—determined to save the child all trouble of experiencing for himself.

If a child is to have freedom for growth it must have freedom to regulate its own life, freedom from interference and supervision; but such sheer anarchy may lead to a licence of growth which may endanger the whole structure. Of all problems, then, this one of finding the minimum of discipline that is necessary for the preservation of the maximum of liberty is the most difficult. To encourage the children to set their own

bounds and to reason out their own discipline needs a real faith in their capacity and a real courage,—the courage to stand by and watch mistakes being made without constantly interfering to set everything right.

There is unquestionably a legitimate field for the setting up of rules. Certain functions, included under the heading of housecraft, and intimately related with the task of self-preservation, have to be performed by every citizen every day. Upon their proper performance depends the well-being of the individual as well as that of the group. They include, cooking, eating, washing-up, bathing, sweeping,—in a word the general care of the body and the dwelling. Until the body is free it is hard for the mind to soar, and thus the body itself is a serious obstacle to anarchy of an extreme kind. Each of these duties, with the help of strict discipline, can be performed in a rapid and efficient manner, thereby adding to the hours of freedom. Children have sufficient common sense to recognise the need for such discipline and can make their own rules prescribing penalties for breaches of it.

On the other hand the ideal behind the running of the workshop must be one of freedom from super-imposed restriction, for craftsmanship has its own standards of excellence, and supplies its own discipline. Provided that the endeavour is intimately related to life,—whether co-operative, as it often will be, or merely individual,—the fullest satisfaction can only be gained in the most perfect manifestation of the capacity to create. The boys' own self-respect in the first instance, followed up by the opinion of the group, both flavoured by a spice of market value,—all these in their own way will provide sufficient discipline.

How often do we stifle the child's imagination for fear that he will never grow up a practical man. Like the brethren of Joseph we have an inborn dislike for brilliant dreamers, who upset the even course of our conventional existence. Yet it is just to the men of imagination that we owe our progress in discovery,—to those who, while recognising the necessary grammar, were willing to leap out into the dark of the unknown, to dream and to imagine new worlds of their own creation. Steering by the light of an anarchic discontent, man has

explored and is still exploring every sea of human knowledge, driven forward by the breezes of his fertile imagination. But with the child we insist that he shall not start out on his voyage until he has learnt off by heart the chart we have drawn for him out of our own experience whilst his little ship of life, anchored within the school-room, wallows in the untroubled calm of the conventional, the artificial and the unimaginative.

It is only through the fullest development of all his capacities that man is likely to achieve his real freedom. He must be so equipped as no longer to be anxious about his own self-preservation; only through his capacity to understand and to sympathise with his neighbour can he function as a decent member of human society and as a responsible citizen. In the course of the slow growth of the spirit of detachment he will also eventually succeed in finding a natural outlet for his inborn capacity for creative expression in that world of abstraction which is also the world of spiritual truth. To have discovered the best means of self-expression as an individual, as a citizen and as a creative agent, and to experience daily the delights and the difficulties of perpetual growth,—this is true freedom.

Any scheme, then, which fails to present to the child the opportunity to make these discoveries for itself, is seriously at fault. Education is sometimes called a tool and is thought of as a factory process. Much of it is perhaps so, and the raw material, the child, is caught and moulded into the desired product as with a machine. But education implies growth and therefore life, and school-time should be a phase of life where the child begins to achieve freedom through experience. By taking it for granted that a child can be taught freedom we deny it life.

There is a world beyond the walls both of home and workshop, outside even the ken of Nature, which can be entirely a man's own, where anarchy is supreme. This is the world of abstraction and of emotion. Having attained self-confidence as to his power to subsist by the labour of his hands, and thus to survive within the human family, both adult and child are free to pass into this other region where there is no grammar except that which the adventurer makes for his own convenience, nor any rules or regulations.

There are very few children to whom this realm of abstraction and emotional expression, this world of the spirit, this kingdom of creative enterprise for its own sake apart from economic or ulterior motive, is not a very real thing indeed. We may stimulate, we may encourage and sympathise, we may provide the means and the opportunity, but if we are honest in our desire to give the child freedom to grow we shall be very careful not to superimpose our own rules, creeds and regulations. The spirit of childhood, like its gift of imagination, bloweth where it listeth, and like the wind it comes and goes, and knows no man-made law. To be real it must be spontaneous. Complete freedom then the child must have, to adventure in the realm of song, of music, of poetry if it wishes, of drama and dance, to revel in the expression of ideas through colour, line or form, or to wander on the limitless horizon of solitary thought and meditation, in touch with the still small voice within.

To imagine that we can teach the child religion is as reasonable as to think that we can teach an orchid to grow and produce flowers to our taste. A suitable soil we can give, some stimulating fertiliser, some source of moisture and a temperature properly adjusted so that Nature may take her own course. But the law of life is growth, and a recognition of all the principles of growth is essential before we can decide what is good for the plant. To try and compel growth, to infuse life from outside, that is the way to bind and destroy.

Life, to be life at all, has to be lived; and the parents' or professors' sins of repression and deprivation, of rod and iron-bound rule, are visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation, and may yet lead civilisation to its doom.

## THE RELATION BETWEEN ART AND RELIGION IN INDIA.

By PROF. RADHAKAMAL MUKHERJI.

The orderly procession of the stars in the heavens, the succession of the seasons and of light and darkness, the cycle of nature's process of growth, decay and rejuvenation, the ebb and flow of the tides, the rhythmical beating of the heart, the periodic fluctuation of sexual life, all these make man peculiarly susceptible to a sense of order and symmetry. Art arises from a consciousness of this attitude. It expresses itself, through a pleasure in forms, colours and sounds and their harmonies and contrasts, in personal decoration, in architecture, painting and sculpture, in song and dance and poetry.

The purest and most typical expression of simple feeling is that which consists of random movements. Hirn says that when these motions assume, as they so easily do, the character of a fixed sequence in time, *i.e.*, when they become rhythmical, they can be and inevitably are, as by a sort of inner compulsion, imitated by the on-lookers. In primitive times the gregariousness of man, under the excitement of periodical feasts, thus usually found expression in rhythmic beating, choral music and dance.

Art had its origin in the choral dance under the mental exaltation of such circumstances and was a powerful social binder. Under the influence of the memories and the emotions which these dances stimulate the primitive group achieves a sense of corporate unity, which makes corporate action emerge out of the fixed routine of ordinary life. The dance gave form at once to the religious ritual and to the art of the primitive peoples. It united them by the power of suggestion, both in offence and mutual defence; and it was in the dance that they prepared for battle and celebrated their victories. Even now poetry, song and music inspire the nations to fight one another.

With peaceful cultured peoples art addresses itself to the task of finding order and symmetry in all activities of life. It raises

work to the expression of happy and noble ideals in forms of wrought metal or carven wood or moulded clay, in images or in low reliefs, in wall paintings or embroidered fabrics. It brings the sexes together and enlivens domestic life. It makes love enduring by borrowing from nature and the sentient life around patterns of everlasting union. It is the mother of social etiquette and good form which lend grace and dignity to human intercourse. It blossoms out into rituals and observances which become fraught with deep inspiring meanings for human life and destiny. It allies itself with religion and, assisted by imagination, creates a language of symbols and a wealth of conventional motifs, borrowed from the ordinary sights and sounds of every day life, which easily express the eternal verities, the profoundest mysteries in simple, familiar garb.

Local styles may vary, the modes and ideals of composition of art may differ among different peoples, but they all seek to express the one great apprehension of all art, the grand principle of harmony, that the *one* is in the *many*, and that the *many* is in the *one*.

Thus, though Muhammadan art is on the whole realistic and secular in subject, and untouched by the spiritual emotion which inspires the art of Buddhist and Hindu, nevertheless, even in the calculating Muhammadan mind, there is the joy of filling empty space with regular geometrical designs in a veritable maze of patterns which express the *many*. But the *many* is also the *one* and this is expressed in Muhammadan architecture by the striving of the numberless crowded geometrical devices to reach in the aggregate, in perspective ascending higher and higher round a dome within which prayers are offered, the infinite itself.

The Hindu mind, more deeply responsive to nature, more profoundly touched by a sense of repose in the midst of the bewildering flux of things, speaks in a language of symbols which tell a different story. The auspicious plant and flower forms which the rustic house-wife draws in front of the threshold, the bunches of grain and mango-leaves tied in beautiful symbolism to the lintel; the lamp beneath the *tulsi* plant; the water vase over which is hung the graceful plantain-branch : all these convey

a symbolic meanings a sense of deeper values, to every Indian heart.

This symbolism is, however, best expressed in the numerous myths and images which are living realities in the Indian heart, expressions of a profound realisation of Life. Such creations represent the soul of India. Several compositional types may be distinguished which represent some of the most significant and exhaustive experiences of the reality.

One is represented by Krishna clasping his beloved in a rhythmic self-abandon. Krishna's figure is in the *tribhanga* posture. Here the objective of art is the vision of the Infinite dancing with the Finite, and the joy of this mystic sportiveness is expressed in a swinging movement both in the vertical and horizontal plane, the counterpart of the mystic strains of the flute which Krishna holds. Such an image is well-known in every house and temple, even in markets and village council-halls. Its appeal is universal.

Another striking Hindu form is that of Siva dancing the dance of death and of life. The figures of the dance are perfected within a vertical circle, surrounded by a halo of fire. It is the expression of life's energy, frolicsome in its infinite destructions, but nevertheless cyclical and timeless in its unchanging completeness.

Another popular figure is that of the Goddess seated on the lion and slaying the demon. The fury of destruction is expressed in the slope of her angry posture, while the helplessness of evil is visualised in the deviation from the straight strong outline.

These last two are the expressions of the conquest of the spirit over brute matter, an event of events which the Indian artist has celebrated in many forms. In the former case, in the figure of the dancing Siva, the action or motion is complete, so that there is established the tranquil repose of an all-engulfing unity. In the latter, the movement continues, and there persists the unsubdued excitement of an incomplete achievement. The process of evolution from the flesh to the spirit is yet proceeding and the unknown sculptor, who makes these images to-day in the cottages of Bengal, still infuses into the limbs of the goddess a vigour which is the outcome of an age-long tradition, the race



expression of the inevitable urge of life that has not as yet found its equilibrium.

Contrasted with this are the inner experience and artistic method which have carved the massive form of the sleeping Vishnu in the South Indian temples. In front of the god the beholder stands simply awe-struck, overpowered by volume. Vishnu is in perfect rest on the waters of eternity. The thousand-hooded snake broods over his sleep. All this is on such a vast scale that space seems conquered. The surrounding impenetrable darkness also suggests a fathomless depth, so that the intellect loses itself and is driven towards the unknown.

In the South, moreover, the city itself resembles the body of Vishnu or Garuda with limbs outstretched, or it is planned after the sacred lotus. In the lotus plan, the city has four gates in four directions, and roads and parks in radiating rows like the petals of the flower. This plan is applied also to the internal arrangements of a temple, which is thus the city in miniature. The temple of Siva is in the *nairit*, (south west) direction where is Yama's abode, and there also is to be found the burning ghat of the city. In the south is Vishnu's temple. The lotus pattern is repeated in the dome of the *Sabha-mandapam*, the seat of the assembly of the village community, while the *sikhara* of Vishnu's temple and the spire of Siva's typify the noble classical conceptions of the mountains of Meru or Kailasa respectively.

As we enter the temple, we have on the walls, right and left, and on the ceiling of the lofty aisles and spacious corridors, illustrations from the Puranas, the epics and other folklore which feed the imagination and satisfy the spirit. Scenes of filial love and service, compassion and pity, heroism and sacrifice, humility and reverence are delineated with an eloquence of ornamental detail and a synthetic apprehension of the whole of life as an everflowing, uninterrupted movement, that are truly remarkable. Through the ceaseless procession of living activity, the beholder is initiated by degrees to images of Life, Death, Eternity and ultimately to the central idea that the whole city or temple seeks to utter—the horizontal expansion allowing thinking space to the brain and the mystic pointing upward satisfying the aspiration of the soul.

The atmosphere of the temple converges into the reliquary proper through dark and ascending stairs and narrowing space. A quiet depth lingers dream-like round the *sanctus sanctorum*. It is there that we find a vast colossal *lingam*, a symbol of the divine creative energy, which rises high as far as the eye can reach in one black solid mass thus expressing the vastness of fathomless space itself, or there is the figure of Vishnu, filling the dark space with its immensity.

There is nothing of emptiness, but all is pervaded by a vast sense of reality. Materially there could be nothing more solid and towering than these figures, but the beholder as he contemplates on them is filled with the serenity and repose, which is of the gods. Sometimes, again, there is nothing in the inner sanctuary, no images or altars, but only a complete, perfect circle, the mystic symbol of the universal, creative formlessness, which supplies the back-ground of every form of external expression.

But it is not the religious creations alone that are endowed with spiritual charm. The Indian artist sees a sacredness in the most common-place objects and expresses passing feelings in terms of the permanent. This is true even of the more recent Rajput and Mughal schools of Indian art which abound in examples of so-called secular themes. There, even in the lowest forms of imitative art, in historical themes and portraiture, the artist has been able to invest his work with a spiritual serenity, so that the personalities depicted therein, in spite of the crowding and restless associations of their lives, seem to be so spiritually remote and detached from the tumult and concern of mundane existence.

Other illustrations are the familiar representations of musical modes in Indian art where one sees the various Ragas wonderfully expressed in terms of colour. Take, for instance, the musical mode *Vrindavani Sarang*. The scene depicted is that of a young woman in a coloured mantle walking through the forest. A thirsty deer stands in her way and craves her sympathy. Across the arid and sparsely wooded landscape, there runs a pure crystal stream. As the symphony spreads over the afternoon sky and reaches the horizon line, one understands the deception of life and

feels the pang and despair of leaving the clear cool stream for the world life which gives no solace to the craving soul.

Such are some of the conceptions which are characteristic of Indian Art and which are yet living traditions in Indian life. Indian art is not abstract but is something living and concrete. It reveals the mass life of man and nature to the individual and is therefore socializing and ethical. It creates in folklore and painting, in myth and poetry, symbols that spring from various forms of social and individual relationships and evoke feelings irrespective of a man's own particular limitations.

In the Indian legends and myths the gods descend to the earth and live the life of the common people. Thus the most familiar activities of everyday life are endowed with sacredness and spiritual charm. The eternal child, Gopal, is the objective of parental devotion and love in every Indian household. Radha and Krishna have attracted to themselves all the passion of romantic love. There is also the Eternal Mother and the Indian learns by tradition to look upon every woman in her image. These eternal relationships live by oral tradition and are recreated in art, and thereupon bind man to his fellows in vital, indissoluble bonds.

Thus is developed a sense of the value and responsibility of life, which inspires a loving humility and sacrifice and a profound sympathy for those who are the victims of fate or misfortune.

### **DIVINE DARK.**

Put out the lamps and let their light  
Dwindle to its last feeble spark ;  
It is the hour of inward night  
And all within my soul is dark.

O, now I fain would be alone  
Until this fiery darkness ends,  
For of a sudden I have grown  
Beyond the need of kindly friends.

Veiled by the little lights of earth  
Your idle mocking laughter runs,  
But know my inward night is worth  
A million of your glittering suns !

**Harindranath Chattopadhyaya.**

# YEATS THE NOBEL PRIZEMAN AND HIS POETRY.

By JAMES H. COUSINS, D.LIT.

[The 1923 award of the Nobel Prize for literature of an idealistic tendency to W. B. Yeats has brought into world prominence the poet who has long occupied a place in many minds as one of the immortals of song. In India he is known not only for his own work, but also for his introduction of Rabindranath Tagore's poetry to the western world. We are permitted to reprint the following short study of Mr. Yeats's works from Dr. Cousin's book "New Ways in English Literature."]

The existence in Ireland, from some time past, of a marked outburst of creative literary activity in the English tongue has become a matter of common knowledge and common joy amongst those who follow the movements of the Spirit towards the regeneration of humanity through the sensitive instruments of the arts. At the head of the modern Irish literary revival, by universal consent, stands the poet, William Butler Yeats.

To understand his position in the long and brilliant hierarchy of bards of the Western Celts, it is necessary to remember that while to Yeats was given the office of restoring to Irish poetry the joy of the artist and craftsman, which was characteristic of the work of the bardic order many centuries before, the actual headwaters of the subsequent stream of modern Irish poetry were somewhat further back. Mr. Yeats has himself indicated them in his lines "To Ireland in the Coming Times".

Know that I would accounted be  
True brother of that company  
Who sang, to sweeten Ireland's wrong,  
Ballad and story, *rann* and song.

\* \* \*

Nor may I less be counted one  
With Davis, Mangan, Ferguson,  
Because, to him who ponders well,  
My rhymes more than their rhymings tell  
Of the dim wisdoms old and deep  
That God gives unto man in sleep.

For seven centuries the genius of the Irish race, under the domination of an alien polity with which it had no spiritual affinity, had maintained a struggle for freedom in the things of the outer life, and flamed at last, in the movement led by Davis, into an emotion whose natural voice was the impassioned lyric. The death of Davis marked roughly the beginning of the era of parliamentary tactics; the stirring adventure of frank revolt gave place to the furtive astuteness of the politician; and the poets took the turning at the cross-roads towards re-creating the veritable Ireland, while the politicians wandered into the slums of party intrigue. It was during this era that Sir Samuel Ferguson pursued his studies in Irish archæology, and pointed the way for the re-creation of the ancient Irish world in poetry.

Ferguson saw the passing of the era of the political ballad, and hailed the coming of the new school of artists in poetry. His own work, with its curious blend of archæology and song fused by love of his country, became an important factor in the early inspiration of Yeats; but the main operation of what the *Gita* calls the "qualities of nature," in calling out the genius of Yeats, came through the historical circumstances that drove Davis to revolt in political ballads, though the circumstances, carried forward forty years, drove Yeats to revolt also against the political ballad itself.

The herald of conflict appeared once more, not with the thunderings of social upheaval, not with the lightnings of inexpressible emotion, but with the calm and assurance of a self-realized spirit whose finger is on the secret of the power that makes and unmakes universes.

Claiming for himself the fullest freedom of spirit, Yeats voiced the genius of revolt, but with a deeper, subtler power.

He spoke for the soul of man, and so for Ireland and for the world. He pondered, and laid aside, the popular form of poetry of half a century before; but the method which he ultimately perfected was the sublimation of the technique of the bardic schools of Ireland before the Norman conquest, with its eye for the significance of details in nature (a millenium before Wordsworth brought Nature into English poetry) and its ear for a music within the music; and the thought-stuff which he mixed into the incomparable lyrics of his early period was his ancestral heritage from his Druidical forefathers, with their insight into the laws of the inner life, and their recognition of the fundamental unity of Nature, Humanity and Divinity.

His poem from which I have already quoted his literary ancestry discloses him as occultist in his knowledge of the finer forces and entities of nature, and as mystic in his interpretation of himself and the universe :

For the elemental beings go  
 About my table to and fro.  
 In flood and fire, and clay and wind,  
 They huddle from man's pondering mind ;  
 But he who treads in austere ways  
 May surely meet their ancient gaze.  
 .....From our birthday until we die  
 Is but the winking of an eye ;  
 And we, our singing and our love,  
 The mariners of night above,  
 And all the wizard things that go  
 About my table to and fro,  
 Are passing on to where may be,  
 In Truth's consuming ecstasy,  
 No room for love and dream at all,  
 For God goes by with white foot-fall.

"The Man who Dreamed of Fairyland" is a beautiful rendering of the first stages of life after death. "The Old Age of Queen Maeve" tells of a Great One speaking through a king in trance.

It is this widening of knowledge and deepening of thought that sent Yeats for beyond the Davis era of Irish poetry. His acquaintance with the founder of the Theosophical movement could not but make a profound impression on one whose natural bent towards the occult was reinforced by the knowledge and tradition of his race. It was quite natural for him to turn up at the foundation meeting of the Dublin Section of the Society for Psychical Research; and in subsequent private investigations, in which I had the privilege of accompanying him, I have observed his immense knowledge of the whole range of theoretical and practical occultism. The fairies to Yeats are no figures of speech, useful to give a verse an Irish flavour, like the harp and shamrock; they are realities, that is, living things of his imagination (whether objective actualities or not makes no matter,) not cold abstractions or conventions. They

.....the embattled, flaming multitude,  
That rise, wing above wing, flame above flame,  
And like a storm cry the Ineffable name,

stratify his world beneath and above the earth's crust and its ponderable inhabitants; and they, and all they stand for, give a richness and complexity to the background of his thought that demands for its expression something more than a formula or a statement of fact, something organic and vital, something that is one with the universal Creative Energy. It was this necessity that drove the first poets of the dawn into myth, and drove Yeats into "The Wanderings of Unsheen," with which he commenced his career in 1889. "Myth," he once said to me, "is vision in action"; and the supreme end of the poet with vision is either the creation of myth that embodies his idea of the Divine Idea, or the reverent and joyful interpretation of God's Myth, the Universe.

To this august office Yeats has dedicated his life. Like his frugal and intensive contemporary in song, Æ, he tunes his reed to beauty, and not so much to the celebration of beautiful things as to the disclosure of the ideal Beauty from which (as the Platonists and Emerson also declared) beautiful things take



their quality. But while "the Beauty of all beauty" is to Æ self-existent and now, it is to Yeats a process. He sees

In all poor foolish things that live a day,  
Eternal Beauty wandering on her way,

and he endeavours to make his poetry a way for her feet. So Æ says his say in great little poems that come as near being poetry without language as Scriabine's Prelude in G is near being music without sound; but Yeats is never satisfied, and is always willing to make alterations that may improve his poems. In his plays, this habit of alteration has made many layers of memory in the minds of the actors. I remember glorying in certain lines at the very earliest rehearsals of "The Shadowy Waters", in which I had a small part; but the printed version is to me much the poorer because those lines do not appear.

The whole purpose and method of Yeats are expressed in these two verses:—

All things uncomely and broken, all things worn and old,  
The cry of a child by the roadway, the creak of a lumbering  
cart,  
The heavy steps of the ploughman splashing the wintry  
mould,  
Are wronging your image, that blossoms, a rose in the deeps  
of my heart.  
The wrong of unshapely things is a wrong too great to be  
told.  
I hunger to build them anew, and sit on a green knoll apart,  
With the earth and the sky and the water remade, like a  
casket of gold  
For my dream of your image, that blossoms, a rose in the  
deeps of my heart.

That is the cry of the artist who is something more than artist only; it is one in spirit with the immortal "shattering" stanza of Omar. It shows the artist, also, deeply concerned with his work; he knows that he can only apprehend and impart

the elusive Beauty by means of his own dream. The birds in the old Irish myth, that hovered about Angus the Young, were white, but they took the colour of whatsoever they lighted upon; and Yeats has spiritual wisdom to know that the white light of ultimate truth must suffer the stain of his own genius, and in his effort to make that stain as fine as the exigencies of his art will permit, he has risen above the limitations of personality, and become in literature the type and supreme expression of his race.

In the qualities by virtue of which he has taken his place in the front rank of singers in the English tongue (an exquisitely delicate music, intense imaginative conviction, intimacy with natural and supernatural manifestations), Yeats is typically Irish. In the elements of intellectual virility, and of composition on the grand scale, (lacking which, he just falls short of absolute greatness, according to Western standards) he is also typically Irish; for we look in vain through the literature of Ireland, Gaelic or Anglo-Irish, for any outstanding expression of that concrete mind whose power of objectivity, whose architectural grasp and appalling patience peopled the mediaeval mind with devils from the Hell of Dante, and strewn Europe with magnificent cathedrals to the man-made and man-like Divinity of a lost revelation.

The genius of Ireland and of Yeats is vagrant and lyrical. In time it may acquire stability, and its earthly twin, solidity and extensiveness; though we may hold the faith that such gain might be at the expense of a quality of much higher spiritual value than mere bulk. To evolve an eternity of noble lines may be a mighty achievement of the mind; to put eternity into a single line, as Yeats has done, is the miracle of the spirit.

## AL-JAHIZ AS A RELIGIOUS THINKER.

By MOHAMMAD BAZLUR REHMAN.

[Amr 'ibn Bahr Al-Jâhiz who died in 869 A.D. (255 A.H.) was a celebrated free-thinker and one of the most voluminous writers of Arabic Literature. For his life see Lucknow University Journal, Vol. II, No. 4.]

In the earlier stages of civilization, religion was of foremost importance among all human institutions and it exercised a tremendous influence in moulding the views and ideas of mankind. It was particularly so among the Muslims; the followers of Muhammad looked at every thing from this point of view and all literary, scientific and political activities centered around it. Among them the individual was more honoured for his knowledge of religion than for his knowledge of anything else. In the history of Islâmic literature we find that the reputation of a thinker or an author depended more on his conception of Islâm and holding fast to the accepted creed than on the originality of his thought or the beauty of his style. Socially and politically his influence in the community was determined by the religious views that he held.

Al-Jâhiz, who contributed to so many different branches of knowledge, received his literary education under the influence of men of letters and culture of Basra, called the *Masjidîyân*, to whom he refers in the *Kitâbul Bayân wat-Tabyîn*. These were men of different shades of opinion and possessing individual views, who gathered together in mosques and quenched, by holding discussions, that questioning spirit which had been aroused under foreign influence. The information that has come down to us about these theological debates is uncertain, confused and unsatisfactory. Probably, as Prof. Margolionth believes,<sup>(1)</sup> the fragments of metaphysical discussions in the *Kitâbul Haywân* are fair specimens of what went on in the mosques. These debaters

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(1) Early Development of Muhammadanism, p. 227.

were the investigators and systematizers who split points, defined the issues and established principles which later on formed the nucleus of different sects. Having his education in such surroundings, *Al-Jâhiz* acquired that true spirit of enquiry which always leads to magnificent results.

The keen interest in religious matters which he thus imbibed by force of circumstances never forsook him all his life. He was one of the earliest of those thinker's who tried to analyse every point in the light of new discoveries in the realms of science and learning and it is only right that he should be reckoned as a *Mutakallim*, scholastic theologian, of the first order. In his views he attached himself to the M'utazilite sect, the most rational school of thought in Islam and by his life-long studies earned the epithet of *Shaykh-ul-M'utazila*, which he very richly deserved.

Our author started his career as Nazzâm's disciple, but later on, having occasion to examine his master's views in detail, and disagreeing with him in certain points, he founded a school of his own. In spite of the fact that he had the greatest regard and respect for his learned master, (1) *Al-Jâhiz* criticises him very severely whenever there is a difference of opinion. (2) He took Nazzâm as an authority on all topics and his works abound in quotations from him.

The chief characteristic of all the works and writings of *Jâhiz* is, that throughout them runs a strain of theological thought that contemplates the M'utazilite view; moreover most of his authorities are men of his own school. On this account he has been charged with writing every thing from the M'utazilite stand-point. (3) Undoubtedly he was very loyal to this school, which he extolled over the rest of the Islâmic creeds. (4) But from all this it cannot be concluded that he was too narrow-minded to study other doctrines. Besides the refutations ascribed to him, the information contained in his extant works, which has been so much utilized by Goldziher in his most scholarly books,

(1) Haywân, Vol. VI., p. 106.

(2) Haywân, Vol. II., p. 56.

(3) Shâhrastâni, p. 52.

(4) Haywân, Vol. I., p. 5

shows that Al-Jâhiz had studied these schisms and possessed the knowledge of even their most minute detail.

Al-Jâhiz was alive to the truth that to confine himself to his own narrow circle of beliefs would not make for the proper study of religion which he had made the purpose of his life. Unlike most of the Muslim theologians, he tried to take a peep at the outer world and see how people who were not his co-religionists felt and thought about the matters which were exercising his own mind.

The sister-religions of Judaism and Christianity were perhaps the first to attract his attention and both of these he has refuted in his treatises—*Kitâb ar-Radd ‘alal Yahûd* and *Kitâb ar-Radd Alan Nasâra*, the latter of which is extant in part in the British Museum. The *Kitâbul Haywân* also contains some reports of discussions between Muslims, Jews and Christians and these seem to have been conducted in good temper. In the aforesaid work as well as in the *Kitâbul Bayân wah Tabyîn*, we meet with references to Zoroaster and his religion and it is remarkable that Al-Jâhiz was the best informed amongst the earliest Arabic writers on Persian topics.(1) Even the religion of the Hindûs, whose ideas had been but lately introduced to the Muslims, did not escape his notice. In the treatise, the *Kitâbul Asnâm*, which is unfortunately lost to us, he particularly dealt with their notions of worship.(2)

Possessing so varied a knowledge, Al-Jâhiz made himself very conspicuous in his age by his religious views and it is important to examine the part that he played in the province of religion. The difficulty in such a study is that our sources of information are vague and scanty; his biographers content themselves with an encomium, they are prodigal in words and give us little beyond the fact that he was the founder of a sect among the Mutazila.

This dearth of material is one of the results of the orthodox reaction which was so successful in destroying the literature of the so-called heretics. All the authorities that are available to-

(1) Prof. Browne's *Literary History of Persia*, Vol. I., p. 110.

(2) *Haywân*, Vol. I., p. 5.

day draw their information about Al-Jāhiz mainly from Al-Kabî(1) who was one of the leading thinkers of the M'utazila. Even Al-Jāhiz's own works do not throw much light on those doctrines which he taught his followers called the Jāhizîyya.

As has already been pointed out, Al-Jāhiz was a M'utazila first, and founder of his own sect afterwards, so naturally he followed in general their system of thought and only disagreed with them in certain details. All the authorities agree that in his views he was too much inclined towards the doctrines of the Tabîyûn, the naturalists. Al-Jāhiz was never a blind follower; he studied natural history for himself and ascertained the truth. His personal observations, combined with the careful study of others who spent their energies in that direction, provide the key-note to those ideas for which he gained so great a reputation even among the most enlightened section of his fellow-thinkers.

So before analysing the principles of Al-Jāhiz it is important to know what these naturalists stood for; and to this end one can not do better than quote from the learned work of Ibnul-Qiftî : (2)

The naturalists were those people who studied the trend and propensity of nature and its effects and manifestations in Creation, vegetable as well as animal. They investigated the peculiarities of plants, physiology of animals, the composition of their parts, the results of their coming together and their different faculties. In consequence of these researches into the Creation of God, who is High and Great, these scholars, calling him the Independent Doer, Maker, Wise and Knowing, hallowed and glorified his name for creating all that exists solely through His own wisdom and for ordaining everything according to His intention and knowledge.

These investigators established that, after reaching a certain limit, which is determined by their reacting dispositions, all animate objects deteriorate, decompose and finally disappear from this world. They thought that this fundamental principle was true in the case of human beings also, and that with the death of the body, the soul likewise perished.

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(1) Author of *Kitâb al-Munyat wal Amâl fi Sharh Kitâbul Milal wan-Nahl*, an extract from which pertaining to the Mutazila, was published by Sir I. W. Arnold in 1902.

(2) Ibnul Qifti, p. 50.

As a result of this view they denied the existence of the world to come, the resurrection after death and the life beyond. According to them, prophets, saints and other religious thinkers taught the people about the life beyond simply for the reason that this idea has a sobering influence and deters them from doing evil and disturbing the peace of the community. These very thinkers are the Zindiqs, for the true believers are those who believe in God, the day of judgment, life after death and all the rest that the scriptures have brought from God, through the prophets.

Such were the thinkers whose views had a great fascination for Al-Jâhiz and on their works, which were mainly based on the Aristotelian philosophy he seized with great avidity. The problem of the eternity of the Qurân and the question of free-will, which distinguished the M'utazilites from their other brethren in faith, were already most prominent. With the study of philosophy new difficulties began to appear, and these were specially concerned with the qualities of God and the Qurânic promise of the beatific vision. These speculations, as McDonald says,<sup>(1)</sup> were of larger future importance than mere fossilizing intellectualism. It is in respect to the interpretation of these ideas that Al-Jâhiz took his position among the leaders of the different M'utazilite schools.

To start with, the precise nature of faith has always been a great controversy in Islam and the earliest theological sects like the Murjites had this problem for their origin; yet it is strange to find that even up to this day their conclusions are anything but definite. For Muslims the question was of tremendous importance, for they believed that it is the faithful alone who shall be saved from hell-fire. Our author's confession of faith was of the utmost simplicity and in his theory we find an attempt to make theology broad enough to give even the unsettled a chance to remain in the Muslim church and he strongly accuses the theologians for passing the verdict of infidelity on such believers.

According to him, every human being naturally acknowledges the existence of the Creator and recognises the need of an apostle. So if a person holds that Allah is his Lord and that Muhammad

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(1) McDonald, Development of Muslim Theology, p. 160.

was His prophet, he is a true Muslim and nothing more should be required of him unless he is really capable of further philosophical reflection. He taught his followers that every true Muslim should believe that God has neither form nor body, but along with this he used to say that if a person could not understand the idea by the light of reason, he should be excused, because for such a one it is enough to believe in His existence.

The conception of God, which is so prominent in the teaching of Al-Jâhiz, has been the subject of unending discussions in the history of the Muslim theology. Besides the fact that, in the Qurân, he is represented as possessing hands, feet, eyes, etc., the believers are promised a vision of God in paradise, which on the strength of the Holy Book and traditions is supposed to be the highest reward held out to them. Necessarily this involves the idea that God has a body or a form which can be seen. In spite of the speculations of Abul Hudhayl and An-Nazzâm, the M'utazilite free-thinkers found it difficult to reconcile this view with the Greek philosophy, and while his colleagues were content to explain it away by making certain reservations, Al-Jâhiz absolutely denied that God has *substance*. He was mere *essence* and as such could not take tangible form. This denial entailed the refusal to believe in the possibility of the Divine vision in Paradise.

These conclusions of Al-Jâhiz were the result of his agreeing with the philosophical thinkers on the question of the attributes of God(1) which in importance came next to that of the form of God. According to the orthodox Muslims, will, knowledge, power and life were qualities which God possessed from eternity; the M'utazilites who called themselves the People of Unity and Justice, objected to this idea on the ground that to take these as eternal would mean admitting the plurality of God. They as champions of absolute Unity speculated on it and formulated theories which ran parallel to the Christian and Greek doctrines. In agreement with Abul Hudhayl and An-Nazzâm, Al-Jâhiz held that these attributes are not external things possessed by God, but modes and phases of the Divine Essence. The will of God, for example, he treats as a mode of knowledge; to say that God

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(1) Shâhrastâni, p. 52.



wills what is good is equivalent to saying that God knows it to be good.

With the advent of intellectualism the Muslims realized the individual consciousness of freedom and human responsibility but with it the Semitic idea of predestination and of the despotism of God were not easily tenable. The conflict of these ideas marked the beginning of thinking life in the theology of Islam and since the Qadarites appeared in the field of speculation, the doctrine of free-will has been the battle ground of sectarian disputes. Al-Jâhiz who was a keen student of natural history observed that stars and planets each have their appointed course, and he saw no reason why this should not be true in the case of every other object in creation. To him the *qadr* or decree of God meant the laws of nature. Consequently he regarded God as the source of universal law and as such He was only responsible for the actions of human beings as the Giver of this law.

Dependent on this conception is the position of man as regards his actions. Here again Al-Jâhiz agreed with the naturalists and believed that all knowledge comes by nature, nevertheless it is an activity of man in which he has no choice.(1) He further enlarges upon this idea and says that man has no other activity but the will and that the rest of his acts are ascribed to man only in the sense that they occur by nature and naturally arise from his will. Will, again, he regards simply as a manner of knowing and so as an accident of knowledge; a voluntary act he defines as one known to its agent.

Assuming that God willed no evil, Al-Jâhiz taught his followers that every man who comes into this world is religiously constituted and is able to discern right from wrong; it is only his personal will that, under certain natural forces, leads him astray. Sin he defined as an act which a man commits although he knows it to be wrong. According to him, those people alone can be called infidels who, knowing the truth about God and His Prophet persist in their wrong beliefs only through their infatuation for their old cult.(2) It was this doctrine that led him to an attempt

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(1) Al-Baghdadi's *Kitab al Farq baynal Firaq*, p. 160.

(2) Al-Baghdadi, p. 160.

to broaden theology enough to give every one a chance to remain within Islam.

Of greater importance than any other doctrine which distinguished Al-Jâhiz from the other M'utazilite thinkers was a principle which he had inherited directly from the deistic naturalists. Regarding the matter which constitutes the Universe, his view was that it is absolutely indestructible; a body once created could not be annihilated even by God, the only possibility being change of form or of constituents.(1) Substance he treated as everlasting, only accidents are created and variable. This view, which was most repugnant to the orthodox Muslims, for it meant the denial of the power of God who is Omnipotent even to destroy, was the result of his belief in the Unity of Nature.(2) M'amar ibn 'Abbâd had developed An-Nazzâm's ideas of creation, theorising that matter as a whole was created by God; and that the changes in it came of necessity from its nature. It fell to the lot of Al-Jâhiz to complete the theory of his master by declaring the aforesaid conclusion. Besides being significant as showing how philosophy affected theology, it meant a great change in man's attitude towards the world unseen.

Retribution in the next world and punishment of transgressing believers were the questions, differences of opinion on which had been the cause of the origin of the M'utazilites. Jâhiz believed that it is not the action that brings retribution, but the intention or the will to perform the action;(3) and, as we have seen, according to him only such actions can be termed sin which are committed in spite of the knowledge of its being wrong.

The theory of Al-Jâhiz was a great revolt against the old gloomy fatalism which made the earlier Muslims labour under the terrible consciousness that every sin, great or little, deserved the wrath of God. Further, he not only agreed with the other M'utazilites in the view that a believer cannot be condemned to the Fire, but his definition of a Muslim was so lax that it included even the most unsettled as regards their religious beliefs. This broad-mindedness is the chief feature which distinguishes Al-

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(1) Ibn Hazm, Vol. IV., p. 195.

(2) Hawwân, Vol. II., p. 48.

(3) Al-Baghdâdî, p. 160.

Jâhiz from the other founders of the Islâmic sects who damned all those who differed from them even in details.

His conception of God and theory of Creation, his idea of the Unity of Nature and of human responsibility, involved a change of view as regards heaven and hell. Basing the argument on his belief that God is just and wills no evil, he taught his followers that He does not cause anyone to enter hell, but that it is the inborn force of a man's nature which leads him to the pleasures of paradise or the terrors of hell. Further, his study of natural history did not allow him to believe that the torments of those entering the Fire shall be everlasting, so he held that the sinners, after some time, shall first turn into fire and then remain in that condition for ever.(1) Moreover it is interesting to note that Al-Jâhiz maintains that the descriptions of the life after death in the Qurân are merely metaphorical.(2)

Besides these general principles of which Jâhiz was the champion and ardent preacher, there is another element that he brought into fuller and more effective working. In the interpretation of facts concerning the religious beliefs he was guided more by the philosophic thinkers than the theologians.(3) Himself being free in life and thought, his attempt was to adapt theology to the requirements of the new learning which was gaining more and more ground among the Muslims. Along with his efforts to popularize philosophic ideas and present them in an acceptable form, he was not slow in applying them to the Qurân and the traditions. The word of God was infallible, so the statements in it could only be explained away. In the *Kitâb at-Tarbî' wat-Tadbîr*(4) Al-Jahiz gives a long list of questions of a religious nature which can only be answered with the help of Greek philosophy. Problems like creation, metamorphosis of unbelievers into swine and monkeys, existence of the *jinn* etc., he has touched in his *Kitâb al-Haywân*. How far he himself was able to assimilate Greek thought with religion, will be discussed later on.

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(1) Shâhrastâni, p. 52.

(2) Bayân, Vol. I., p. 86.

(3) Shâhrastâni, p. 52.

(4) Van Voten's edition, pp. 101-116 and 135-162.

(5) Haywân, Vol. I., p. 150.

As is to be expected of so learned a man and so keen an observer, Jâhiz does not believe in the ordinary superstitions(5), but it is surprising to find that in the *Kitâb al-Haywân* they are rather prominent. Besides devoting a long chapter to proving the existence of the *jinn*, he seems to have believed in angels also, just as they are depicted in the *Qurân*; moreover he had complete faith in the fact that Jâfar ibn Alî Talib(1) shall have two wings in the next world in place of his arms which were cut off in one of the expeditions of the Prophet. He has a special chapter on the evil eye which he endeavours to explain and of which he gives some notable examples. By relating an anecdote about a snake-charmer in the court of Caliph Mansûr, he shows that there is much truth in spells.(2) He also lends his name to the stereotyped theory of the origin of the Arabic language and its being spoken for the first time by Ismâ'il who was born of non-Arab parents.(3) It is rather difficult to decide whether on these occasions Al-Jâhiz is merely narrating facts as they have been handed down, or giving them as his personal views.

Though Jâhiz has been reckoned as one of the greatest religious thinkers of his time and all over the Islamic world his books on theology were keenly sought after(4), nevertheless, even in his life-time, a reaction had unfortunately begun to make itself evident in the Caliphate in favour of the traditional theology, a movement hostile to the M'utazilites. Al-Jâhiz laments in his treatise on the *Nâbita* that the traditionalists studied the *Kalâm* and made use of it against them.

The position of those who had inherited any foreign philosophic thought gradually became more and more unsatisfactory and even impossible. In 260 A. H., five years after the death of Jâhiz, was born Al-Ash'arî whose doctrines eventually killed speculation on religion. He gave such a blow to the rationalistic views of the M'utazila that they never rose again. How Al-Jâhiz was viewed under this new regime of orthodoxy would be

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(1) See *Ibu Hisham*, pp. 794-795.

(2) For the superstitions see *Haywân*, Vol. II., pp. 47, 117-198 and Vol. III., p. 71.

(3) *Bayân*, Vol. III., pp. 144-45.

(4) *Yâqût's Mujam Al-udabâ*, Vol. VI., p. 73.

pretty clear from the following quotation from al-Baghdâdî (d. 429 A.H.). After stating and refuting all the so-called heresies of Jâhiz he says : (1)

The followers of Al-Jahiz were led away by the beauty of the language, used by him in his books about which one might say : "They are compositions which are clear, though they have no meaning; and contain words which terrify, though they have no substance." Had they known the ignorance shown in his heresies, far from ascribing beauties to him, they would have begged Allah's pardon for calling him a man.

And to whoever boasts about Al-Jâhiz we commend the saying of the orthodox about him in the words of the poet concerning him :

*If the ugliness of the swine is doubled  
His ugliness would still be inferior to that of al-Jâhiz  
A man who himself is a substitute for hell  
And a mote in the eye of everyone who looks at him.*

And this harsh criticism is simply due to the fact that Jâhiz was not narrow-minded enough to confine himself to those facts and theories alone which were centuries old, and believed that like all other human institutions religion also was governed by the universal law of development and evolution and that for its survival it must adapt itself to its environment.

The great ideal of Al-Jâhiz was to effect a compromise between Islamic theology and philosophy; but, in whatever way we may value that to-day, the fact remains that, according to the judgment of his own age, he did not achieve his purpose.

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(1) Kitâbul Farq baynal Firaq, pp. 180-182

## NOTES AND COMMENTS.

By RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

I have a letter in which I was asked to give my opinion about institutional religion.

As an abstract idea I have nothing to say against it. It is, like the caste system, perfect when ideally represented. Men can be classified according to their inherent differences in temperament. If all the natural Brahmins came together to carry on the work which was only for them to perform, then, through their mutual encouragement and co-operation, a tremendous force could be generated for the good of man.

But, directly a group is formed, its personality almost always gives rise to an egoism which judges its own value by its external success and physical duration. The sect struggles for bigness and for self-preservation even at the cost of truth. The growing consciousness of its own distinction develops into a pride, which like the pride of wealth is a temptation.

It is extremely difficult to become truly Christian, and yet, by following the easy path of belonging to a Christian sect, one seems to acquire the merit of being a Christian, and to have a right to despise even one's betters who by chance or choice do not profess Christianity. This has invariably been the case in all religions which crystallise themselves into sectarianism. Religious communities are more often formed upon custom and herd habit than upon truth.

The children born to a Christian family are included in the community, not because they have proved their fitness to belong to it, but because of the accident of birth. They do not have the time or opportunity to discover their own inclination towards the religion they profess. They are persistently hypnotised into believing that they are Christians, and so we often witness the scene of men preaching Christianity, as missionaries or even as

bishops, to their unchristian fellow-beings, whom they would have killed without a qualm as soldiers, or held down for ever under their heels as diplomats,—had they followed their own true vocations.

An Institution which brings together individuals who are profoundly true in their common aspiration is a great help to its members; but if, by its very constitution, it offers accommodation to those who merely have the uniformity of habit, and not the unity of true faith, it necessarily becomes a breeding place of untruths. And because all organisations, by the virtue of their combining power, mechanically acquire a certain amount of force, such untruths find a ready opportunity to create widespread mischief.

Christ, like all other spiritual personalities, was solitary in his greatness and yet he had his pure relationship, through truth and love, with all humanity. His spirit works in solitude in the depth of men's souls and therefore, while we find great-hearted individuals to be on the side of the people who are oppressed and insulted, the Church is often on the side of vested interest and established power which have come into being for exploiting the weak. This is because the Church as an organisation is a power which has its natural alliance with other powers that are not only non-religious but very often irrelegious; in fact, it is even ready to make its bargain with the very powers that crucified Christ.

It is a truism to say that the character of the majority of the members in any community determines the level of its ideal; and therefore an institution which is indiscriminate in the choice of its materials, and which has an inordinate greed for the augmentation of its numbers, very often also becomes the most efficient organ for expressing the collective passion of its members.

Have you not noticed this during the late war? And does

not the profession of Christianity, in its sectarian aspect, fashion, in times of peace, a cloak of respectability which covers a multitude of sins?

I know that a community of God-seekers is a great shelter for man, but directly it grows into an institution it is apt to give ready access to the devil by its back door. All the same the fact cannot be ignored that Religion has ever sought its shelter in institutions; in fact, when the former is independent of the latter, it is not recognised as a religion at all.

This is the case with the harvest of religious thoughts, reaped in a great period of Indian history, which is garnered in the Upanishads. These had nothing to do with any institution; they never harboured any creeds, nor built rigid walls round them of logical consistency; and therefore people brought up in the atmosphere of some sectarian religion consider the texts contained in them merely as so many seeds of religious Philosophy. But there can be no doubt that these seeds came out of the fruit of a true life of religion, fully lived. Such religion is no less a religion because it is free from the bondage of sect.

What is remarkable about the religion of the Upanishads is that, though it was worked out by individuals who were not tied to each other by a common bond of conformity, a natural cord of unity nevertheless runs through their different thoughts of all variety of shades. For myself, I believe in such freedom of spiritual realisation, and I feel that the habit of obedience produced by the constant guidance of fixed creeds and ever-watchful sects enfeebles the spiritual instinct of man and gives rise to materialistic ideas disguised in religious phraseology.

The letter, to which I began by referring, came to my mind once again when I read the chapter on the Upanishads in Prof Radhakrishnan's book on *Indian Philosophy*. Not being a scholar or a student of philosophy, I do not feel justified in writing a critical appreciation of any description about the Philosophy of the Upanishads. What I venture to do is, to express my satisfaction at the fact that my friend, Prof. Radhakrishnan, has



undertaken to explain the spirit of the Upanishads to English readers, hoping that it will help some of them in the training of their attitude of mind towards the reality which is spiritual.

It is not enough that one should know the meaning of the words and the grammar of the Sanskrit texts in order to realise the deeper significance of the utterances that have come to us across centuries of vast changes, both of the mental as well as the external conditions of life. Once the language in which these were written was a living one and, therefore, the words contained in them had their full context in the life of the people of that period, who spoke them. Divested of that vital atmosphere a large part of the language of these great texts offer to us merely its philological structure and not life's subtle gesture which can express through suggestions all that is ineffable.

For an illustration let me refer to that stanza of Keats' *Ode to a Nightingale*, which ends with the following lines :

The same that oft-times bath  
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam  
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

All these words have their synonyms in our Bengali language. But, if through their help I try to understand the above lines or express the idea contained in them, the result would be contemptible. Should I suffer from a sense of race superiority in our own people, and have a low opinion of English literature, I could do nothing better in my support than literally to translate or to paraphrase in our own tongue all the best poems written in English.

Unfortunately the Upanishads have met with such treatment, at least in some parts of the West, and the result is typified disastrously in a book like Gough's *Philosophy of the Upanishads*. My experience of philosophical writings being extremely meagre, I may be wrong when I say that this is the

only philosophical discussion about the Upanishads in English, but at any rate the lack of sympathy and respect displayed in it for these collections of the most sacred words that have ever issued from the human mind, is amazing.

Though a number of symbolical expressions used in the Upanishads can hardly be understood to-day, or are sure to be wrongly interpreted, yet the messages contained in these, like some eternal source of light, still illumine and vitalise the religious mind of India. They are not associated with any particular religion, but they have the breadth of a universal soil that can supply with living sap all religions which have any spiritual ideal hidden at their core, or apparent in their fruit and foliage. Religions, which have their different standpoints, each claim them for their own support.

This has been possible because the Upanishads are based not upon theological reasoning, but on experience of spiritual life. And life is not dogmatic; in it opposing forces are reconciled—the ideas of non-dualism and dualism, the infinite and the finite, do not exclude each other. Moreover the Upanishads do not represent the spiritual experience of any one great individual, but of a great age of enlightenment which has a complex and collective manifestation, like that of the starry world. Different creeds may find their sustenance from them, but never can set sectarian boundaries round them; generations of men in our country, no mere students of philosophy, but seekers of life's fulfilment, may make living use of the texts, but can never exhaust them of their freshness of meaning.

For such men the Upanishad ideas are not wholly abstract, like those belonging to the region of pure logic. They are concrete, like all truths realised through life. The idea of Brahma when judged from the view point of intellect is an abstraction, but it is concretely real for those who have the direct vision to see it. Therefore the consciousness of the reality of Brahma has boldly been described to be as real as his consciousness of an *amlaka* fruit held in one's palm. And the Upanishad says :

**Yato vácho nivartante aprápya manasá saha.**

**Anandam Brahmano vidván na vibhetti kadáchana.**

*From Him come back baffled both words and mind. But he who realises the joy of Brahma is free from fear.*

Cannot the same thing be said about light itself to men who may happen, by some mischance, to live all their life in an underground world cut off from the sun's rays? They must know that words can never describe to them what light is, and that the mind, through its reasoning faculty, can never even understand how one must have a direct vision to realise it intimately and be glad and free from fear.

We often hear the complaint that the Brahma of the Upanishads is described to us mostly as a bundle of negations. Are we not driven to take the same course ourselves, when a blind man asks for a description of light? Have we not to say in such a case that light has neither sound, nor taste, nor form, nor weight, nor resistance, nor can it be known through any process of analysis? Of course it can be seen; but what is the use of saying this to one who has no eyes? He may take that statement on trust without understanding in the least what it means, or may altogether disbelieve it, even suspecting in us some abnormality.

Does the truth of the fact that a blind man has missed the perfect development of what should be normal about his eyesight depend for its proof upon the fact that a larger number of men are not blind? The first creature which suddenly groped into the possession of its eye-sight had the right to assert that light was a reality. In the human world there may be very few who have their spiritual eyes open, but, in spite of the numerical preponderance of those who cannot see, their want of vision must not be cited as an evidence of the negation of light.

In the Upanishads we find the note of certainty about the spiritual meaning of existence. In the very paradoxical nature of the assertion that we can never know Brahma, but can realise Him, there lies the strength of conviction that comes from personal experience. They aver that through our joy we know the reality that is infinite, for the test by which reality is apprehended

is joy. Therefore in the Upanishads *Satyam* and *Anandam* are one. Does not this idea harmonize with our everyday experience?

It has been said by some that the element of personality has altogether been ignored in the *Brahma* of the Upanishads and thus our own personality, according to them, find no response in the Infinite Truth. But what then is the meaning of the exclamation :

**Vedāhametam purusham mahāntam.**

*I have known him who is the Supreme Person !*

Did not the sage, who pronounced it, at the same time proclaim that we are all *amritasya putrah*, sons of the Immortal?

Elsewhere it has been declared :

**Tam vedyam purusham veda yathā mā vo mrityuh parivyathah.**

*Know him, the Person who only is to be known, so that death may not grieve thee.*

The meaning is obvious. We are afraid of death, because we are afraid of the absolute cessation of our personality. Therefore, if we realise the Person as the ultimate reality, whom we know in everything that we know, we find our own deathless personality in the bosom of the eternal.

There are numerous verses in the Upanishad which speak of immortality. I quote one of these :

**Eshadevo visvakarmā mahātmā  
sadā janānām hridaye sannivishtah  
hridā manishā manasā viklipto  
ya etad vidur amritās te bhavanti.**

*This is the God who is the world-worker, the supreme soul, who always dwells in the heart of all men; those who know him through their mind, and the heart that is full of the certainty of knowledge, become immortal.*

To realise with the heart and mind the divine being who dwells within us is to be assured of everlasting life. It is *mahátmá* the great reality of the inner being, which is *visva-karmá* the world-worker, whose manifestation is in the outer work occupying all time and space.

Our own personality also consists of an inner truth which expresses itself in outer movements. When we realise, not merely through our intellect, but through our heart strong with the strength of its wisdom, that Mahátmá, the Infinite Person, dwells in the Person which is in me, we cross over the region of death. Death only concerns our limited self; when the Person in us is realised in the supreme Person then the limits of our self lose for us their finality.

The question necessarily arises, what is the significance of this self of ours? Is it nothing but an absolute bondage for us?

If this world were ruled only by some law of forces then it would certainly have hurt our mind at every step and there would be nothing that could give us joy for its own sake. But the Upanishad says that from *Ananda*, from an inner spirit of Bliss, have come out all things and by it they are maintained. Therefore, in spite of contradictions, we have our joy in life, we have experiences that carry their final value for us.

It has been said, that the Infinite Reality finds its revelation in *ánanda-rūpam amritam*, in the deathless form of joy. The supreme end of our personality also is to express itself in its creations. But works done through the compulsion of necessity or some passion that blinds us and drags us on with its impetus, are fetters for our soul; they do not express the wealth of the infinite in us, but merely our want or our weakness.

Our soul has its *ānandam*, its consciousness of the infinite which is blissful. This seeks its expression in limits which, when they assume the harmony of forms and the balance of movements, constantly indicate the limitless. Such expression is freedom, freedom from the barrier of obscurity. Such a medium of limits we have in our self which is our medium of expression. It is for us to develop this into *ānanda-rūpam amritam*, an embodiment of deathless joy, and only then the infinite in us can no longer remain obscured.

This self of ours can also be moulded to give expression to the personality of a business man, or a fighting man, or a working man, but in these it does not reveal our supreme reality, and therefore therein we remain shut up in a prison of our own construction. Self finds its *ānanda-rūpam*, which is its freedom in revelation, when it reveals a truth that transcends self, like a lamp revealing light which goes far beyond its material limits, proclaiming its kinship with the sun. When our self is illuminated with the light of love, then the negative aspect of its separateness with others loses its finality, and then our relationship with others is no longer that of competition and conflict, but of sympathy and co-operation.

I feel strongly that this for us, is the teaching of the Upanishads and that this teaching is very much needed in the present age for those who boast of the freedom of their nations, using that freedom for building up a dark world of spiritual blindness, where the passions of greed and hatred are allowed to roam unchecked, having for their allies deceitful diplomacy and wide-spread propaganda of falsehood, where the soul remains caged and the self batters upon the decaying flesh of its victims.

## THE DIVINE ORDER.

Certainly, ideals are not the ultimate Reality, for that is too high and vast for any ideal to envisage ; they are aspects of it thrown out in the world-consciousness as a basis for the workings of the world-power. But they are primary, the actual workings secondary.

They are nearer to the Reality and therefore always more real, forcible and complete than the facts which are their partial reflection. Reflections themselves of the Real, they again are reflected in the more concrete workings of our existence.

The human intellect in proportion as it limits itself by the phenomena of self-realising Force fails to catch the creative Idea until after we have seen the external fact it has created ; but this order of our sense-enslaved consciousness is not the real order of the universe.

God pre-exists before the world can come into being, but to our experience in which the senses act first, and only then the finer workings of consciousness, the world seems to come first and God to emerge out of it, so much so that it costs us an effort to rise out of the mechanical pluralistic and pantheistic conceptions of Him to a truer and higher idea of the Divine Reality. That which to us is the ultimate is in truth the primary reality.

So too the Idea which seems to us to rise out of the fact, really precedes it and out of it the fact has arisen. Our vulgar contrast of the ideal and the real is therefore a sensuous error, for that which we call real is only a phenomenon of force working out something that stands behind the phenomenon and that is pre-existent and greater than it. The Real, the Idea, the phenomenon, this is the true order of the creative Divinity.

—Aurobindo.

## THOUGHTS ON THE PRESENT SITUATION.

By THE EDITOR.

The seer who would lead men into action is often forced into a position between two fires. The vision of truth, which comes to him direct and not as the conclusion of a formal intellectual process, is untranslatable into terms of precision such as the ranks may read as they run, and it has therefore to be communicated in parables. This, on the one hand, simply keeps his honest opponents puzzled, while giving opportunity for a *reductio ad absurdum* to those who are otherwise. On the other hand, his *chelas* tend to grow into the worst enemies of his Ideal by parading as a sectarian fetish that which their *guru* had given them as a working symbol.

This is what Mahatma Gandhi seems now called upon to contend with; and, trust him as we may to take care of the principles for which he stands, he should command, at this juncture from his true admirers, be they for or against any particular item on his programme, a frank and considered submission of their doubts and difficulties, if not of helpful suggestions.

We contribute, as our mite towards this end, sundry thoughts from two western Idealists, placing first before our readers certain difficulties in the words of M. Romain Rolland<sup>(1)</sup> who cannot be accused of bias and than whom no looker on is more fitted to judge of ideals and their working. And thereupon we shall offer certain solutions discussed by Mr. Arthur J. Penty<sup>(2)</sup>.

M. Rolland, after introducing his hero as the man who has stirred three hundred million people to revolt, who has shaken the foundations of the British Empire, and who has introduced into human politics the strongest religious impetus of the last two thousand years, proceeds with his study of the Mahatma's activities, so far as they relate to recent Indian politics, as follows.

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(1) **Mahatma Gandhi**, by Romain Rolland, London; The Swarthmore Press Ltd.

(2) **Post-Industrialism**, by Arthur J. Penty, London; George Allen & Unwin Ltd.



It should be noted that when Gandhi stepped into the political field as leader of the opposition to the Rowlatt bills, he was moved only by a desire to spare the country from violence. The revolt was bound to come; the point, therefore, was to turn it into non-violent channels.

To understand Gandhi's activity, it should be realised that below it is the solid groundwork, the basic foundation, of religion, but that the political and social campaign, which is based thereon, is not the ideal continuation of this unshakeable foundation, being only the best structure possible under present conditions.

Gandhi believes in the religion of his people, in Hinduism. But he is not a scholar, attached to the punctilious interpretation of texts, nor is he a blind believer accepting unquestioningly all the traditions of his religion. His religion must satisfy his reason and his conscience.

Nor does he look upon Hinduism as the only religion, and this is a very important point. "I believe the Bible the Koran, and the Zend Avesta to be as divinely inspired as the Vedas. Hinduism tells every one to worship God according to his own faith and so it lives at peace with all religions." Gandhi claims that the revelation of passive resistance came to him after reading the Sermon on the Mount, in 1893.

Ever since Rousseau, our Western Civilisation has been attacked by the greatest and broadest minds of Europe. When Asia began to revolt against Western oppression, she had only to peer into Europe's own files to compile formidable records of the iniquity of her so-called civilised invaders. Gandhi did not fail to do so. Further, in the depths to which Europe sank during the last war, called the "War for Civilisation" she, in her insanity, even invited the peoples of Asia and Africa to contemplate her nudity. They saw her and judged her.

Gandhi had however seen the real face of western civilisation long before 1914. It had revealed itself to him unmasked during his twenty years campaign in South Africa. This civilisation says Gandhi, is civilisation in name only. In reality it corresponds to what Hinduism calls the Dark Age. It has set up material well-being as the only goal of life. It scorns spiritual values. It means hell for the weak and the

working classes. India's aim should be to repudiate this western civilisation.

The nucleus of modern civilisation, its heart, so to speak, is machinery. The machine has become a monstrous idol. It must be done away with. To a free India, heir to British machinery, Gandhi would prefer an India dependent on the British market. Indian progressives, imbued with modern ideas, ask what would become of India if she were to have no railroads, tramways, or industries? To which Gandhi replies that thousands of years ago India learned the art of self-control and mastered the science of happiness. She does not need the machinery of large cities. Her ancient prosperity was founded on the plough and the spinning wheel, and on her philosophy. India must go back to the sources of her ancient culture.

This is Gandhi's fundamental argument. It stands for a definite denial of Europe's so-called progress, a repudiation of her scientific achievement. The youthful Occident, on the other hand, carried away by its own speed, does not realise sufficiently that its own law of progress is subject to eclipses, back-slidings and recommencements. Hence the conflict.

M. Rolland merely notes here that this important question demands discussion.

But what if the West in its obsession, is unable to correct itself until too late? Shall the East, which allowed itself to be caught in the toils of this mechanical civilisation, fascinated by its momentary glamour, allow itself to be dragged to its doom, now that its eyes are opened, without at least one last struggle of its yet undefeated spirit? Let us see what light M. Rolland has to throw on the struggle which is in progress, before we go on to the discussion which he says is demanded.

Gandhi, continues M. Rolland, never asks men for more than they can give. But he asks for all that they can give. Gandhi knows what he may demand of India and India is prepared to give whatever Gandhi may demand.

"I know" says Gandhi "that *Swaraj* is the object of the

nation and not non-violence." And he adds,—words amazing on his lips—"I would rather see India freed by violence than chained like a slave to her foreign oppressors." But, he continues, correcting himself at once, this is an impossible supposition, for violence can never free India. Swaraj can only be attained by soul force—Satyagraha—which he also defines as truth-force and love-force.

Exalted pride, the Mahatma's proud love of India, demands that she should scorn violence as unworthy and be ready to sacrifice herself. Non-violence is her title of nobility. If she abandons it she falls. Gandhi cannot bear the thought.

In 1921 Gandhi's power was at its apogee. The people looked upon him as a saint. He was the undisputed master of India's policy. It was up to him to start a political revolution if he thought fit, or even to reform religion. He did not wish to do so. Moral grandeur? Moral hesitancy? Both perhaps. I will try to explain my feeling in regard to the living enigma, with the religious respect I have for this great man and the sincerity I owe to his sincerity.

Gandhi is an exception among prophets and mystics, for he sees no visions, has no revelations; he does not try to persuade himself that he is guided supernaturally, nor does he try to make others believe it. He sanctions no tyranny, not even for the good of the cause. He does not set up his country against other countries; his patriotism is not confined to the boundaries of India. He says: "A patriot is so much less a patriot if he is a lukewarm humanitarian."

But have his disciples always felt this way? On their lips, what becomes of Gandhi's doctrine, and, interpreted by them, how does it reach the masses? Mr. D. N. Kalekar writes a *Gospel of Swadeshi*, which Gandhi stamps with his approval. The conclusion of this runs as follows:

We should avoid being intimate with those whose social customs are different from ours. We should not mingle in the lives of men or people whose ideals are different from ours. Every man is a brook. Every nation is a river. They must follow their course, clear and pure, till they reach the Sea of Salvation, where all will blend.

What is this but the triumph of nationalism? The narrowest and most unpolluted? Why does Gandhi let his magnificent ideal, a message for the whole world, be imprisoned within the narrow bounds of an Indian theocracy? Beware of disciples! The purer they are, the more pernicious.

But this is not all. While the disciples who live near the master are at least tinged by his noble spirituality, what about the disciples of his disciples, and the others, the masses, to whom the doctrine comes merely as vague and broken echoes?

The distinction: "Hate Satanism while loving Satan" is a little too subtle for the average man to grasp. And when public speakers dwell on the crimes and treachery of the English, anger and rancour pile up behind the sluices; and beware when the sluices burst.

When Gandhi, explaining why he advocates the burning of foreign stuffs, says to C. F. Andrews that he is transferring ill will from men to things, he does not realise that the fury of the masses is gathering impetus, and that instinctively these masses reason: "things first, men next." He does not foresee that in less than three months afterwards men will be killing men.

Gandhi is too much of a saint. He is too free from the animal passions that lie dormant in man. Beware the mob! The moral precepts of a Gandhi will not be able to curb it. The only way, perhaps, to prevent it from running wild, would be for him to pose as an incarnated god. But Gandhi's sincerity and humility prevent him from playing this role.

And what will come now? Will this people remain true to its ideal? Nations have short memories, and I should have but slight faith in India's power to remain true to the Mahatma's teaching, if his doctrines were not an expression of the deepest and most ancient longings of the race.

In India there are still too many who do not see beyond *Swaraj*. Incidentally, I imagine that this political goal will soon be reached. Europe, bled by wars and revolutions, impoverished and exhausted, despoiled of her prestige, cannot long resist on Asiatic soil the aspirations of the awakened people of Asia.

But this would mean little, if the surging spirit of Asia did not become the vehicle for a new ideal of life and of death, and

what is more, of action, for all humanity. The world is swept by the wind of violence. Centuries of brutal national pride, whetted by the idolatrous ideology of the Revolution, spread by the empty mockery of the democracies and crowned by a century of inhuman industrialism, a materialistic system of economics where the soul perishes, were bound to culminate in these dark struggles.

We know the material ties that weigh on twentieth century Europe, the crushing determinism of economic conditions that hem it in; we know that centuries of passions and systematised error have built a crust about our souls which the light cannot pierce. But we also know what miracles the spirit can work.

I have this faith. I know it is scorned and persecuted in Europe, and that in my own land we are but a handful who believe in it. But even if I were the only one to believe in it, what would it matter? Faith is a battle. And our non-violence is the most desperate battle. The way to Peace is not through weakness. We do not fight violence so much as weakness. Moaning pacifism is the death-knell of Peace; it is cowardice and lack of faith. Let those who do not believe, who fear, withdraw. The way to peace leads through self-sacrifice, this is Gandhi's message.

The great religious apparitions of the Orient are ruled by a rhythm. One thing is certain: Either Gandhi's spirit will triumph, or it will manifest itself again,—as were manifested, centuries before, the Buddha and the Messiah,—till there finally is manifested, in a mortal half-god, the perfect incarnation of the principle of life which will lead a new humanity on to a new path.

Let us stop here, with M. Rolland's burning message of hope, and come back to the first point of difficulty indicated by him,—the charge of the return to Medievalism levelled against the Mahatma's programme by reason of his revolt against the machine, and incidentally to the question sometimes raised, but never definitely discussed, that inasmuch as the plough the *charka*, the loom and the like are also machines, where should the line be drawn and why?

On these points the observations of Mr. Penty, though not

directed by him to the Mahatma or to India, deserve anxious consideration at the hands of our countrymen. With the pluck of a true idealist, Mr. Penty does not shirk the point; with the conviction of a man who has seen and done things for himself, he indicates the remedy. We give below the substance of his argument as far as possible in his own words.

Among the changes in thought that have come about as a result of the war, the most significant is the changed attitude towards Industrialism. Before the war it was taken for granted by most people as a thing of permanence and stability, while it was everywhere assumed that whatever evils were associated with it were incidental, and would disappear before the march of progress. Now-a-days all that is changed.

The Socialist theory of social evolution, based upon the assumption that machinery is a creative force, has been entirely falsified by experience, since so far from new forms of social order and new traditions arising in response to the stimulus of the machine, as Marx predicted, the unrestricted use of machinery has proved to be purely destructive.

The evidence that industrialism is a blind alley from which we must retrace our steps or perish, becomes more conclusive every day. Whatever excuse there may be for the mistaken judgments of Owen and Marx, there is simply no excuse for socialists to-day,—the cancer of industrialism has begun to mortify, and the end is in sight.

It is urgent that we should seek to return to the point at which we lost our way. Such being the case, medievalism is not romanticism, but rather the last word in utilitarianism, as all must sooner or later find out. It challenges the conception of progress through an indiscriminating industrial advance by reference to a past age which, whatever may have been its defects, was at any rate free from the more fatal defects of the present.

The modern world is not interested in medievalism, not because it is more realistic, but because it lives on phrases and disregards things, because it is satisfied with words like progress, emancipation, liberty, which can be twisted to mean anything, because it is not interested in fundamental things.

In this view, the problem of machinery has a positive and a negative aspect. Its negative aspect is to prevent the further destruction of the traditions of civilisation, and its positive aspect is the re-creation of such traditions as the misuse of machinery in the past has destroyed.

When we come to think of things in this way, we begin to see that though machinery has been the more active agent in the destruction of our traditions, yet it is by no means the only agent and that it would not have been anything like so destructive had it not gone hand in hand with the subdivision of labour.

To explain what I mean it will be necessary to make clear the difference between the *division of labour* which is a natural and normal thing, and the *sub-division of labour*, which is both unnatural and abnormal.

The division of labour is a necessity of any civilised society since, as it is obvious that a man cannot supply all his own needs, the labour of the community must be divided between different occupations. One man is a potter, another a weaver, a third a carpenter and so forth; upto this point the division of labour is justified, not merely because it is a necessity of civilisation, but because it enlarges the life of the individual and his opportunities for self-expression. In the seventeenth century, however, under the impulse of profit-making a further development took place.

The classical example of the sub-division of labour is that eulogised by Adam Smith, namely pin making, in which industry it takes twenty men to make a pin, each man being specialised for a lifetime upon a single process. This sub-division of labour and its recent development into scientific management are the curses of industrial civilisation, for by reducing men to automatons they reduce them to mere fragments of men; they undermine their spiritual, moral and physical life and disintegrate their personality, while by giving rise to gluts in the market they lead inevitably to sweating and economic insecurity.

Of course this system cannot last. Its own activities are generating toxins which are poisoning it. For while on the one hand it is giving rise to wholesale incompetence, on the other, by destroying all charm in work and turning it into hated toil, it has roused a spirit of class hatred that expresses itself in revolt.

Moreover it uses up our natural resources at such a ruinous rate that, apart from any other consideration, the limit of exhaustion must soon be reached.

Over-specialisation is the bane of the modern world and it affects the intellectual worker not perhaps in the same degree, but with consequences as potent for evil as those which are deplored in the world of labour. It is said that in Germany specialisation, before the war, had reached such a development that each individual became a monomaniac in his own subject!

To this development of specialisation a limit must be placed somewhere. In the intellectual world no line can be drawn and the only remedy is to exalt the idea of a cultural unity. But in industry it is different. There a line can and should be drawn and I submit it should be through the point which craft development had reached before the sub-division of labour replaced the division of labour. To suffer specialisation to proceed further is, to use an engineering term, to trespass on the margin of safety.

If society is to be reconstructed on a basis that allows for a margin of safety, scientific management and the sub-division of labour must be abolished and a return made to handicraft as the basis of production, using machinery only in an accessory way. If this be done machinery might become a blessing instead of the curse it is to-day. It is because machinery has for the most part followed along the lines laid down by sub-division of labour that it has been so grossly misapplied. At all costs the traditional normal human relationships that are to be found at the centre of a normal society must be restored, and the use of machinery limited in such a way as not to interfere with them.

The truth is, of course, that all creative work is finally personal. It originates in one mind, though the assistance of others may be used to carry it into effect. We speak of the architecture of the Middle Ages being democratic, and it *was* democratic in the sense that the individual worker enjoyed a liberty in respect to the details of his work that is impossible to-day. Yet it was hierarchical at the same time. No building was the work of a committee, but of an individual who knew how to avail himself of the creative capacity of his subordinates.



It is to this Medieval system that we must get back. It is not incompatible with the use of a certain amount of machinery for doing the rougher and heavier work, but it is incompatible with the sub-division of labour.

But, it will be said, these things may be so, yet it is hopeless to abolish the sub-division of labour or to limit the use of machinery. The worker of to-day has no experience of the handicrafts, and has become too much a part of the system to rebel against it. To which I answer that, while not denying the truth in such scepticism, yet the question is, not finally how I or anybody else is going to change the industrial system, but how the capitalists and their blind followers are going to preserve it from destruction.

When people speak of changing the system, they very often mean little more than changing the ownership of the system. Hence, the real issue with them is finally the problem of how power is to be attained. But it is obvious that the attainment of power and a capacity to use it for the public advantage are two entirely different things. 'The Laborities do not recognise the existence of the problem of men and machines that lie at the centre of the economic problem and, because they do not, they are as impotent in the face of the present economic morass as any previous government.

Marx saw that the investment and re-investment of surplus wealth for further increase would, in the long run, produce an economic deadlock, but what he did not see was that his process of industrial development was not only destructive of capitalism, but of the very fabric of society, that the unrestricted use of machinery and mechanical methods would bring into existence a civilisation so complex that the human mind would be unable to comprehend all its multitudinous interconnections. And because our modern civilisation makes demands on our alertness and many-sidedness with which our wits and sympathies cannot cope, it tends to degenerate into anarchy.

Recognising, as we do, that our industrial system is in a state of disintegration, the problem that presents itself is, not how to capture or overthrow the existing system, but how a new

civilisation can be built out of its ruins. Accepting the position that our industrial system is doomed, we should deal with our unemployed as individual men, rather than in the mass, and set to work to turn them into agriculturists and handicraftsmen. There should be no more difficulty about that, if undertaken in a public way, than there was about turning civilians into soldiers during the war.

Pausing for a moment to mark our gratification at the remarkable way in which Mr. Penty's conclusions coincide with the lines of rural reconstruction adopted by Visva-bharati in Sriniketan, we shall conclude by giving the equally luminous exposition of this British idealist of the mechanical degeneration which is threatening to overtake democracy itself,—again a welcome contribution from overseas to the Visva-bharati Ideal.

One immediate practical difficulty which stands in the way of the re-organisation of society on a democratic basis is the tendency of modern collective activity to be choked by a multiplicity of committees. It matters not what the nature of the activity may be,—cultural or political, official or non-official,—the same fate overtakes all modern people whenever they attempt to act together.

If we reflect on this phenomenon, only two deductions can be made from it. Either democracy is an impossible ideal; or our conception of democracy is a false one. The latter I believe to be the true explanation.

Society was more democratic in the Middle Ages. The law was supreme. The king was as much subject to it as any of his subjects. The government was also democratic, but not in the modern sense, for it was government by consent rather than by election. Democracy to-day is identified with the idea of majority rule. The exaggeration of this idea leads to all the trouble, inasmuch as when men come to believe that there is something sacrosanct about majority rule, they waste such an amount of time in discussing points of procedure and all kinds of inconsequential things, that no time is left for the things that

really matter, with the result that majority rule defeats its own ends.

The waste of time in a general committee resulting from attempts to realise the democratic principle, leads to the appointment of sub-committees to deal with details. With the extension of activities the average committee man gets lost amidst the complexity of detail, until a time comes when only the permanent officials understand the business in hand. When that point is reached, substantial power tends to pass into their hands entirely. The democratic form is retained but its reality goes.

This is the inevitable ending of all democratic bodies as at present constituted. They get things done, but not in the way that any one particularly desires they should be done; this provokes rebellion within the body, the rebels assuming that they suffer because of too little democracy; whereas the truth is we suffer at the same time from too much and too little—too much democratic machinery, too little democratic spirit.

Our democratic ideas have been inherited from Rousseau; but, as a matter of fact, for Rousseau democracy was only a means to an end, not an end in itself, the end being government by the wise. The whole trouble of the modern world, from one point of view, is precisely that the best and the wisest do not automatically come to the top under democracy any more than under any other form of government. A capacity for public speaking, rather than personal character, becomes the primary qualification for public life. With this comes about a deterioration in the type of public representative and, consequent on this decline, there grows up a political machine which can automatically produce majorities. Lastly follows political corruption and jobbery and the defeat of everything that the ideal of democracy exists to promote.

In the Middle Ages, king and peasant, priest and craftsman, were bound together by a common religious tradition which, however much they might disagree, was stronger than their differences. As a consequence of the modern gulf,—due to a variety of causes,—between the cultured and the uncultured, such as never existed in the past, the wise are no longer understood of the people.

In this light the problem of democracy is seen to be dependent upon our capacity to create a culture in which every member of the community can share. For, as Ramiri de Maeztu observes, "men cannot unite immediately among one another; they unite in things, in common values, in the pursuit of common ends."

Perhaps now we may begin to understand where the weakness of democracy is to be found. It places the love of one's neighbour before the love of God. Even in educational institutions, which are presumably interested in cultural values, they do not place cultural (which is the same as spiritual) interests first. And, as to politics, pursued apart from a new ideal of life as expressed in spiritual values, it tends to lose touch with reality and degenerate into mere opportunism, or secret force.

The great leader, like the great artist, subordinates himself to the needs of a great tradition. As such his spirit is necessarily democratic, for the true democratic spirit is not the one that seeks to give the public what they want, like the Northcliffe Press, but one that can subordinate itself to the real public need. Two very different things; for the time server is the first; the great teacher the second.

To what then does the great teacher subordinate himself? To the great communal traditions of the past, from which he chooses his vehicle of expression, seeking however always to transcend them. The truth is, that it is impossible to discover the future apart from an understanding of the past, as the fact that the modernists are invariably taken by surprise, bears witness.

The original mind, as Mr. G. K. Chesterton remarks in his preface to Mr. Penty's book, always goes back to origins. That in a nutshell is the justification of the leader of the present movement, which is miscalled retrograde only by those who are blind to everything except immediate advantage. And, in view of his love for the English race which the Mahatma has never lost even in his darkest trials, it gives us peculiar pleasure to report this unconscious vindication, coming from Great Britain itself, of the essentials of his policy.

## Ashutosh Mukherji.

*It is with deep sorrow that I offer my tribute of appreciation to the memory of Ashutosh Mukherji.*

*Men are always rare in all countries through whom the aspiration of their people can hope to find its fulfilment, who have the thundering voice to say that what is needed shall be done; and Ashutosh had that magic voice of assurance. He had the courage to dream because he had the power to fight and the confidence to win,—his will itself was the path to the goal. The sudden removal of the vigour of such a personality from among our people has caused it a reeling sense of dizziness, like the blankness of exhaustion following a serious loss of blood.*

*The complex personality of Ashutosh Mukherji had its various channels of expression. It is not in my power to deal in detail with his many gifts which found scope in so many different fields of achievement. My admiration was attracted to him where he revealed the freedom of mind needed for work of creation. He had not the dull patience and submissive efficiency that is content to keep oiled and working the clock-work of an organisation: he despised to try and win merit by diligently turning the official prayer-wheel through an eternity of perfect monotony. It had been possible for him to dream of the miracle of introducing a living heart behind the steel framework made in the doll factory of bureaucracy, though this could only be done through a revolution upsetting the respectability of rigid routine and incurring thereby the displeasure of the high priest of the Machine-idol.*

*The creative spirit of life which has to assert itself against barren callousness must, in its struggle for victory, wreck things that claim only immediate value. We can afford to overlook such losses which are pitifully small compared to the great price of our object which is Freedom. Ashutosh heroically fought against heavy odds for winning freedom for our education. We, who in our own way, have been working for the same cause, who deserve to be treated as outlaws by the upholders of law and order in the realm of the dead, had the honour of receiving from him the extended hand of comradeship, for which we shall ever remember him. In fact he removed for us the ban of official untouchability and opened a breach in the barricade of distrust, establishing a path of communication between his institution and our own field of work, but never asking us to surrender in the least our independence.*

*Ashutosh Mukherji touched the Calcutta University with the magic wand of his creative genius, in order to transform it into a living organism belonging to the life of the Bengali people. This was his gift of gifts to his country, but it is a gift of endeavour, of tapasyá, which will reach its fulfilment only if we know how to accept it.*

# VISVA-BHARATI BULLETIN

## I

### Rabindranath to Chinese Students.

*[Report of first talk, on the day of his arrival at Shanghai to a gathering of Chinese Students in the garden of Dr. Carsun Chang.]*

It is a day of rejoicing for me, that I who belong to a distant part of Asia should be invited to this land of yours, and I am deeply thankful that such good fortune has come to me.

I shall make a confession. When I had your invitation I felt nervous ; I had read so many conflicting opinions about your religion and your customs that I asked myself : “What is it these people expect when they invite me to their country, and what message is it necessary for me to take for their welfare ?”

Before Christmas I had been debating this and putting off the date of my departure, partly because I was unwell, but also, quite frankly, because I could not make up my mind. In the meantime, Spring broke out in my own land.

A sense of compulsion had been urging me to sit down and prepare my lectures. Having to write in a language not my own, this preparation was necessary for me and took time. But Spring came and the poet heard its call. Day after day tunes came into my mind, songs took shape, and I was lured from what I thought was my duty.

Yet I could not get rid of the trouble in my heart. How was I to stand before my friends in China, after idling away my time doing nothing, or what was perhaps even worse ? But surely you don't expect fulfilling of engagements from poets. They are for capturing on their instruments the secret stir of life in the air and giving it voice in the music of prophecy. Yes, a poet's help is needed at the time of awakening, for only he dares proclaim that, without our knowing it, the ice has given way ; that the winter which had its narrow boundaries, its chains of ice, inhospitable and coldly tyrannical, is gone. The world has for long been in its grip,—the exclusive winter that keeps the human races within closed doors. But the doors are going to open. Spring has come.

I had my faith, then, that you would understand my idling, my defiance of duty. And it came to my mind : Is it not the same thing, your invitation and this invitation of the Spring breeze, which was never ignored by your own wayward poets who forgot their duty over the wine-cup? I too had to break my engagements, to lose your respect,—and thereby win your love. In other continents they are hard taskmasters ; they insist on every pound of flesh ; and there, for the sake of self-preservation, I would have done my duty and forgotten my muse.

I say that a poets' mission is to attract the voice which is yet inaudible in the air ; to inspire faith in the dream which is unfulfilled ; to bring the earliest tidings of the unborn flower to a sceptic world.

So many are there to-day who do not believe. They do not know that faith in a great future itself creates that future ; that without faith you cannot recognise your opportunities which come again and again, but depart unheeded. Prudent men and unbelievers have created dissensions, but it is the eternal child, the dreamer, the man of simple faith, who has built up great civilisations. This creative genius, as you will see in your own past history, had faith which acknowledged no limits. The modern sceptic, who is ever critical, can produce nothing whatever,—he can only destroy. Let us then be glad with a certainty of faith that we are born to this age when the nations are coming together. This bloodshed and misery cannot go on for ever because, as human beings, we can never find our souls in turmoil and competition. There are signs that the miracle has happened. That you have asked me to come to you is one of them.

For centuries you have had merchants and soldiers and other undesirable guests, but, till this moment, you never thought of asking a poet. Is not this a great fact,—not your recognition of my personality, but the homage you thus pay to the springtime of a new age? Do not, then, ask for a message from me. People use pigeons to carry messages ; and, in the war time, men valued their wings not to watch them soar, but because they helped to kill. Do not make use of a poet to carry messages !

Permit me, rather, to share your hope in the stirring of life over this land and I shall join in your rejoicing. I am not a philosopher : therefore keep for me room in your heart, not a seat on the public platform. I want to win your heart, now that I am close to you, with the faith that is in me of a great future for you, and for Asia when your country rises and gives expression to its own spirit ; a future in the joy of which we shall all share.



Amongst you my mind feels not the least appression of any undue sense of race feeling, or difference of tradition. I am rather reminded of the day when India claimed you as brothers and sent you her love. That relationship is, I hope, still there, hidden in the heart of all of us,—the people of the East. The path to it may be overgrown with the grass of centuries, but we shall find traces of it still.



When you have succeeded in recalling all the things achieved in spite of insuperable difficulties, I hope that some great dreamer will spring from among you who will preach a message of love and, therewith overcoming all differences, bridge the chasm of passions which has been widening for ages. Age after age, in Asia great dreams have made the world sweet with the showers of their love. Asia is again waiting for such dreamers to come and carry on the work, not of fighting, not of profit-making, but of establishing bonds of spiritual relationship.

The time is at hand when we shall once again be proud to belong to a continent producing the light that radiates through the storm-clouds of trouble and illuminates the path of life.

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## II

### The Eastern Idea of the Infinite.

By Ajitkumar Chakravarti.

*[We are indebted to Mr. C. F. Andrews for the pleasure of being able to publish this article the MS of which he recently found amongst his papers, having been made over to him for revision by the author, the late Ajitkumar Chakravarti, one of the earliest and most devoted workers in Santiniketan Asram who helped on the development of the Visva-Bharati ideal.]*

The picture of Time, as modern Science presents it to our gaze, does not uplift the soul. It is that of a boundless ocean on the side of the past, with a boundless ocean on the side of the future, and only a tiny island of consciousness given to us in the present whereon to take our stand, the foundations of which appear to be rocking between the past and the future even while we live and move and have our being upon its surface.

Such an infinity must be a nightmare to the brain that ponders long in thought about it. Our senses, our feelings, our thoughts vainly strive to comprehend it. One gain, and only one gain, it brings. It deepens the sense of mystery with regard to the universe in which we live. But that alone is not sufficient for our spiritual needs. The new age in which we live, is still groping for the deeper spiritual vision, which alone can unify the world. But as far as we can at present judge, modern Science can never by itself reveal that vision to mankind.

The higher thought of India was never greatly concerned with this outward infinity which relates to space and time. In that wonderful chapter in the Bhagavad Gita, where Srikrishna, in divine compassion, reveals to the bewildered gaze of Arjuna His Visvarūpam, or Universe Body, the mortal man Arjuna, who is privileged to see such an immortal sight, becomes crushed by the awe-inspiring vision of the Deity's myriad flaming eyes of suns and moons and planets and galaxies of stars, of the endless wheels of universal forces whirling and circling in the Deity's hands, of the numberless mouths of the Deity devouring countless worlds. At the terrific spectacle, Arjuna cries out at last in dismay, imploring Srikrishna to resume His incarnate human form; for the Visvarupam, the Universe Body of the Lord, is more than mortal mind can bear.

It is impossible for us, if we proceed by the path of modern Science alone, to reach any end, either of space or of time. Worlds unfold within worlds; systems within systems. There is ever a vast beyond, in comparison with which the immediate and momentarily present space and time are but as shadows in a flying dream. Who knows what undiscovered dimensions may not be all while existing, besides the three conventional ones that we already know? Who knows again what diverse aspects of space and time may not be apparent to other categories of thought, superior to our own,—aspects with novel colours, atmospheres and appearances that our senses have never perceived, our mind never imagined.

In this august movement of creation, as it reveals its outward shape and form, what prospect is there, in very truth, before mortal man but that of being swung helplessly up and down, in light and in darkness, in shadow and shine, in life and in death? Man is an infinitesimal speck in the vast inane,—a midget, whose span of life is but for an infinitesimal moment and then extinguished for ever, while the vast play of forces ceaselessly goes on.

Rabindra Nath, our Poet, has expressed the feeling of this external aspect of infinity in a poem, from which I venture to give a prose translation, however inadequate, of one section, that runs as follows :—

This is thy play,  
 Thou swingest us in thy swing to the rythm of a soundless melody.  
 For a moment thou liftest us into light,  
 The next moment thou hurlest us back into the darkness.  
 When the swing goes up we laugh for joy,  
 But when it goes downward we cry out in fear.  
 Thou takest thine own treasure  
 From thy right hand to thy left, and from left to right again.  
 Thou sittest in solitude,  
 Gathering the suns and moons with thy swing eternally.  
 Now thou uncoverest them and they are naked.  
 Again thou veilest them as with a garment.  
 Vainly we cry out loudly,  
 Thinking that the treasures of our heart are wrenched away.  
 But everything is whole and complete,  
 There is nought that suffers loss;  
 Only the swing itself perpetually comes and goes.

Here is the modern poet's vision ; and sometimes in books of the West we find this new outlook on the universe becoming made into a **Weltanschauung**, the basis of a new world-faith. The evolution of the world is conceived of by these modern writers as the unfolding of a single life, of which we all partake, and into which our consciousness is able, at times of insight, to dive deep down. According to this world-view, we are one organic whole, which has passed through endless stages of unconsciousness until it reaches to the sub-conscious, and then from the sub-conscious to the self-conscious thought and self-conscious act in man. Indeed, it may pass on to still further stages of higher consciousness, as superior to this stage, where we are now, as our intellect is superior to the blind instinct of the amœba.

In metaphysical works, that were written in the Sankrit period of Indian literature, there are passages which distinctly point to a somewhat similar vision of man's soul. According to the Sanskrit writers on psychology, for instance, our consciousness is made up of many layers or depths, the superficial layer of reason being the only one fully known to us. The lower layer of instinct we share with other sentient creatures : and there is a lower and deeper layer still, which we possess in common with unconscious inorganic things.

These sub-conscious and unconscious states are not within the field of our outward knowledge; they do not come within our every-day practical experience. But there may take place, at times, a sudden "uprush" of the soul within us. Then, reason itself becomes supra-rational and consciousness leaps forward, from its narrow limit of the self, to the universal. At such times, we feel not only the life of plants and animals, but even the unconscious existence of dust and stones, as if it were our own. We are one with the Universe.

Such a state of mystical union is spoken of in the Vedanta; and I find that although the modern writers, who thus seek in the West to explain matter in terms of spirit, have not gone to the farthest reach of the inner vision, they have much in common with this form of ancient Indian thought. Such welcome voices of our present age, which are being heard from within the very fortress of science, show clearly that both gross materialism and blank agnosticism are vanishing quantities.

These are not the final words that will be spoken by science in our own day. A new harmony is being wrought out of the discords of the past, and the gossamer fabric of a new idealism is being woven on the loom of the modern scientific mind. This expansion of the individual consciousness into the universal, is the keynote to the music of the infinite, which is sung throughout the Upanishad. It is a living faith, an inward spiritual experience, not a mere outward intellectual apprehension in space and time. Therefore it never stands appalled at the vastness and multiplicity of the Universe, knowing that within the spirit the whole world rests as idea, just as in the kernel of the acorn lies the promise and potency of the giant oak.

To a mind trained in the ancient modes of thought of India, an apprehension of infinity which is conditioned by the measuring rod and the chronometer, has no importance. To the imagination of India, the distinction between the finite and the infinity, between time and eternity, is resolved in harmony and rhythm and conscious life. The infinite is grasped, not as an abstract philosophical idea, but as the one living reality among all finite forms and experiences.

Western scholars have often compared the *Advaitam* of ancient Indian thought with the *Absolutism* in Western philosophy. They have regarded it as a negative idea derived from living experience. But no Indian ever thought of the *advaita* philosophy in that way. Rather the *Advaita* doc-

trine, in its purest form, represents a living synthesis, in which the static and dynamic, the being and becoming, the unconscious and the conscious, the one and the many, have been knit together closely in an interplay of forces, which are never in discord one with another.

Perhaps the Bhagavad-Gita is the book which best represents the synthesis underlying the whole *Advaita* doctrine in its application to human life. It traces this out along the different paths of *jñāna*, knowledge ; *karma*, work ; and *bhakti*, devotion. It then shows in what manner, along each path, the goal of the *Advaitam* may be reached. The *mukti*, or freedom of consciousness, that is thus attained, is not mere emptiness but connotes the full consciousness of the universal.

Furthermore, the conception of personality has never been confined in India to the limits of the individual self. Personality has rather been regarded as the coming forth of the individual into that which is universal. The environment of the individual, being part of the self, the wider it reaches out, the wider and larger it spiritually grows. In this sense to lose the lower self is to find the higher self. Ultimately, when all selfishness has been eliminated, the consciousness of personality becomes universal.

The researches of modern psychology appear in a remarkable degree to corroborate the view here outlined. The idea is coming more and more into the foreground of human thought, and Sir J. C. Bose's experiments appear to be giving fresh evidence in its favour, that personality in a greater or less degree continues to exist throughout all nature, that is to say, throughout what is called inanimate as well as what is known as animate. The human personality, therefore, being itself the complex of innumerable lesser personalities, must have two aspects within itself, the one of self-isolation, the other of identification with others. Both these are true : and any system of ethics that gives undue prominence to the one apart from the other must be built up on a wrong foundation.

Call it by whatever name we will, there is a form of consciousness, rare but nevertheless actually attained by men and women who are living today, in which we pass beyond the present bounds of time and space. There the One and the Many, the Finite and the Infinite, meet. All the universe is surcharged with infinite beauty and wisdom, infinite goodness and love. Through each avenue of the spirit pours in, or issues forth, the divine fullness. It is what Wordsworth calls, 'that blessed mood' and the Upanishads

name *Anandam*. In this supra-normal state, the infinite, as the Vedanta says, 'breaks the cords of the heart' and sets the spirit free from its present outward limitations.

The Upanishads, the Bhagavaugita, Sankara's writings, the medieval saints like Kabir and Nanak, the modern sages and poets like Maharshi Debendranath and his son Rabindranath Tagore, are all of them filled with this ecstatic vision of the infinite. The very imagery in which the thought is clothed often coalesces and even coincides. In them, the infinite and the absolute are not consigned to an abstract perfection, that has no reference to the changes in life and time and place and form. Rather in the midst of all the changing manifoldness and transitory appearance of the outward form, the one absolute is perceived and known.

We are beginning to feel in India, with a thrill of delight and of expectation, that the same stream of spiritual self-realisation, which was our life in the past, is coursing still through our present art and poetry. As we pursue its long history with the eyes of the mind, from the dim back-ground of the past right down to the present, the urgent claim reaches our ear from the West that the human world still needs this mighty conception of the Infinite, in which religion and science are united, in which our consciousness ranges onward, in ever-widening circles, till it embraces the very dust and stones.

A purely materialistic interpretation of the universe can never satisfy the human heart, or ever fulfil the demands of the intellect. Mankind has already grown tired of its assumptions. A larger, ampler and wider faith is needed for our age. Yet the material side of modern life has advanced, while the moral side has not yet been able to keep pace. The soul of man has sought in vain for its proper nourishment and food. Over all the doubt and perplexity, the haste and confusion, of the apparently triumphant West, the cry of the Prophet of Nazareth is heard :

**What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?**

## III

**Indo-Cham Art in Champa (Anam).***By Phanindranath Bose, M.A.*

Indian art and sculpture travelled over the main-land of Further India along with Indian civilisation in the early centuries of the Christian Era. It gradually penetrated Siam, Cambodia, Champa (Anam), as well as into Java and other islands of the Indian archipelago. And in these travels Religion was its vehicle. With the acceptance of the cult of Siva or Vishnu, or the teachings of Lord Buddha, by the inhabitants of the Further East, the necessity of making images of Brahma, Vishnu, Siva as well as of Buddha and of Bodhisattvas arose, as well as of erecting temples in order to enshrine these new gods and goddesses.

The architects and sculptors must have had to serve as disciples under Indian *Gurus*, brought over perhaps from India, from whom they learned the canons of Indian iconography. In some cases they followed these in a graceful manner of their own ; in others they could not grasp their full significance, and the result was a lowering of the high standard of the Indian original.

While Cambodia provides us with the best specimens of Indian art and sculpture in Further India, and Java has preserved for us the vast pyramidal temple of Borobudur, the artists of Champa were not inspired by the Indian ideal in the same way. They followed the Indian canons, and got the Indian form,—bereft, however, of the inspiration. The result was that they could not approach the best specimens of Indian sculpture of the Gupta Period.

It is nevertheless interesting to consider the extent and nature of influence which Indian art exerted in Champa and what images, symbols and designs were favoured by the artists of Champa, which was under the domination of Indian culture for more than thousand years from the 3rd century to the 15th century A. D.

It was possible for Indian art to exert so much influence on Cham art because of the colonisation and occupation of Champa by the Indian settlers. Indian colonists and merchants had been in touch with Champa from the 1st century A. D. Ptolemy, who wrote about A. D. 150, mentions many geographical names in Further India of Sanskrit origin. The legends of Fou-Nan (which comprised Champa and Camboja) as transmitted by the

Chinese, tell us that a stranger named Houen Tien, who practised the Brahmanic cult invaded the kingdom of Fou-Nan, married the queen and made himself the master of the place. M. Pelliot (*Le Fou Nan* 291) believes that this tradition is only a reminiscence of the first colonisation of Champa by the Hindus in the first century A. D.

This theory is supported by the earliest epigraphic document yet found, an inscription of a king of the family of Śrī Māra, who was perhaps the founder of the Indian dynasty of Champa(1). Though this document is not dated, it bears a close resemblance to the celebrated inscription of Rudradamana at Girnar and to the contemporary inscription of Satakarni Vasishthiputra at Kanheri. M. A. Bergaigne, on epigraphical grounds, places this earliest record in Sanskrit in Champa in the third century A. D.(2) It is precisely the time which Chinese historians ascribe to the foundation of a new kingdom at the southern extremity of their Empire.

Thus it seems that from the beginning of the first century A. D., if not earlier, Indians were in touch with Champa and by the second century A. D. they had established their suzerainty over the Chams, the original inhabitants.

Where did these Indian colonists come from? M. A. Bergaigne holds that they hailed from southern India and professed the Brahmanical faith. Indeed, we find in Champa, the image of Siva Nata Rāja, which is found in large numbers in Southern India, and some other images which are rare in Northern India. But the Mahayana form of Buddhism, which spread over Champa, flourished mostly in Northern India. It is rather probable that both the Northern and Southern parts of India had each supplied their quota of colonists to Champa.

With the establishment of the Hindu colony in Champa, Hindu civilisation and culture found easy acceptance in that land. The Chams evidently looked upon the culture of the Indians as superior, and came to adopt their manners and customs. The Indian kings of Champa also began to erect in the land of their adoption new temples dedicated to the images of their own gods and goddesses. The inscription of Vo Can (the first of its kind in Champa) is nothing but a grant for a temple. The inscription of Dharma Maharaja Sri Bhadravarman I refers to the temple dedicated by the king to Siva. Thus Indian art and architecture received their initial impetus. Private individuals also made liberal grants for Indian images

(1) cf. *Le Royaume de campa*—M. Maspero in *T'oung Pao* 1910.

(2) cf. A. Bergaigne :—*Inscriptions Sanscrites de campa* (1889).



and temples. The result is that we have a great variety of Hindu and Buddhist images still preserved in the land of the Chams(3). In our study of Indian art and sculpture in Champa, however, we have to take into consideration not only these monuments but also such sidelights as may be found to be thrown on their religion.

Champa welcomed both Hinduism and Buddhism from India, but more specially the former. The cults of Siva and Vishnu were clearly in great favour, for not only do we find numerous images of these deities but also of their consorts Párvatî and Laksmî. Brahmá, the creative personality of the Hindu trinity, however, was not so popular. Buddhism also prevailed in Champa but did not flourish to the same extent as in Java or China. It is generally asserted that Hinduism is not a proselytising religion like Buddhism. In this case, however, we find Hinduism overspreading this foreign land, making converts and turning it into a country of Hindu gods and goddesses. In India itself, Hinduism has also absorbed within its fold numerous outsiders(4).

The influence of Indian Art is further clearly perceptible in the decorative designs and motives used mainly in Cham architecture and sculpture. For instance the *Padma* (lotus), as in India, claimed the prominent attention of the artists of Champa, and as in the sculptures of Bharut, Sachi and Amaravati, it served as a highly decorative motive. It is the emblem of purity and chastity, so it finds a happy place in religious sculptures.

Sometimes animals referred to in the Indian myths, such as Makara and Garuda, play their part in Cham sculpture. As in India, *Garuda* is seen carrying Vishnu on his back (at Hurng-thanh) or fighting with serpents as at Van-turong. *Garuda*, though the king of birds, is not represented like an ordinary bird, but rather like a human being with wings. The Indian *Makara* also caught the fancy of the Cham artists. It is found in the *frontons* of Binh-Lam and at Khuong-my. Sometimes from his mouth a human figure or a Nandin is seen escaping. M. H. Parmentier thinks that the *Makara* played the same part in the field of decorative design in Champa as the Cham lion. The *Nága* with three, seven or nine heads is also used as a decorative element, but its importance in the Cham designs is only secondary.

(3) M. L. Finot has done good service in the cause of Indo-Chamart by making a list of Champa monuments under the title of *Inventaire Sommaire des monuments chams de l'annam* B. E. F. E.—O. Tome I P. 27.

(4) Prof. D. R. Bhandarkar, in his paper on "Foreign Element in Hindu Society" has ably dealt with this point. (*Vide* Indian Antiquary, 1911).

*Brahmanic Sculptures*: The Brahmanic sculptures in Champa include the images of Brahmá, Vishnu, Siva, Umá, Lakshmî, Ganesa, Garuda and Nandin.

Brahmá, the first personage of the Hindu trinity, is not a conspicuous figure among the Brahmanic monuments of Champa, where, as in India, his temples or images are not numerous. In the Matsya Purána, Brahmá is described as having four faces. Sometimes he is seated on a *hamsa* and sometimes on a lotus. In Champa, too, Brahma's characteristic is that he is *chatur-mukha*. He is seen in the bas-relief of Tourane and also at Myson(5). Sometimes he is represented along with the other deities of the Hindu trinity.

The most popular of the gods of the Hindu trinity in Champa was Siva who seems to have caught the imagination of the Chams. The images and temples of Siva are often referred to in the Champa inscriptions, wherein homage is paid to Siva, the Mahadeva, with numerous epithets such as Sarva, Bhava, Pashupati, Ishána, Bhîma, Rudra, and Mahesvara.

Siva was regarded as the guardian deity of Champápura, as the capital of Champa was called. The earliest local inscription in which we get a reference to Siva worship, belongs to the fourth century A. D. The imperial Guptas were then ruling over Northern India. It was also the time, which witnessed the revival of Hinduism in India. It is not improbable that the wave of this Neo-Hinduism in the mother-country reached the colony of Champa and strengthened the hands of the Hindu colonists.

The sculptors of Champa made the images of Siva in various postures. They, however, seemed to prefer to represent and worship Siva in the form of a *lingam* (phallus). A tower in Pho-lai still contains a *lingam in situ* in the centre of the sanctuary. In India, at the present day, most of the Siva temples contain nothing but the *lingam*. The worship of the *lingam* was perhaps prevalent in Rigvedic times(6). Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar, though he found no trace of this worship in the earlier literature, does not deny the possibility of its existence at that early period(7). Whether or not we agree with Hopkins as to the Greek influence behind *lingam* worship, no one will deny that the worship of Siva and his emblem, the *lingam*, was of Non-Aryan origin.

(5) M. Finot—La Religion des Chams d'après les monuments. (B. E. F. E.—O. I.)

(6) Hopkins :—*Religions in India* P. 150, n.

(7) R. G. Bhandarkar :—*Vaisnavism, Saivism, and minor religious systems* P. 104.

Besides the more usual form of *lingam* in Champa we come across another type known as *Mukha-linga*, that is to say, a phallus with a face. M. Aymonier, the pioneer in the field of Indo-Sinology, discovered one such *mukha-linga* in the tower of Po Klong Garai. He thus describes it: "In the interior of the tower.....the idol is a *linga*. On this *linga* is sculptured in half-hunch a fine head of a male divinity of natural grandeur bearing fine moustaches. This is certainly Siva"(8).

M. Finot, the Director of the French School in the Far East, remarks, however, that it is more exact to say that it is the founder king of the temple identified with the God Siva. The Cham sculptor, here, made a departure from the accepted lines and brought in his own ideas about dress, —the physiognomy, head-dress and ornaments of the *mukha-linga* being exactly those which the Champa sculptors invariably give to Champa kings(9).

Many *mukha-lingas* have been discovered in India. General Cunningham found one at Sahri-bahlol(10). Among the finds of the Varendra Research Society of Rajshahi, there is a Siva *lingam* with one face in black chlorite stone(11). The earliest instance of *mukha-linga* in India goes back to the first century B.C.(12). The idea here also was to identify a human being with the Deity whose image he dedicated.

This shows that the Indian colonial art drew its inspiration from the mother-country, but when the *mukha-linga* was identified with some local chief, the dress and ornaments were not imitated from Indian sculpture, but were a representation of those in actual use in Champa. The colonial artists having thus apparently reserved freedom in matters of detail.

Siva is also seen in Champa in his other usual Indian forms. M. Finot speaks of two bas-reliefs of Tourane, which represent Siva on Nandin, his bull, bearing a lance in the attitude of attack. This form is not special to Champa. The canons laid down by Hemadri correspond to this attitude of Siva. He describes Siva as riding a bull, but having five faces.

In front of the temple of Po-klong Garai, Siva is represented in a standing posture with six arms. His two upper arms are clasped behind

(8) J. A. 1888 pp. 67-68.

(9) B. E. F. E. O. Vol. I p. 14.

(10) A. S. R. Vol. V p. 45.

(11) Its photo (bearing No. 82) is given in their catalogue.

(12) In the Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey (1909-10) Mr. R. D. Banerjee describes a *mukha-linga* (height 4¼") which came from Bhita in the Allahabad District.

the head, and the others bear a *trisūla*, a lotus, a sword and a bowl respectively—the usual emblems of Siva. In India, Images of Siva are found with arms ranging from two to ten.

Natarāja, the well-known dancing figure of Siva, which is so conspicuous in Southern India, is one of the forms which has found its way into Champa. Siva is represented as dancing the *Āndava* in the bas-relief at Tourane. The dance of Siva in the form of *Natarāja* symbolises 'the action of cosmic energy in creating, preserving and destroying the visible universe.' (13) This Natarāj form of Siva though more popular in the South, is not actually lacking in other parts of India. An image of Natarāja Siva was found in the District of Dacca.

Another bas-relief at Tourane shows Siva seated with a rosary of beads in one hand and a *trisula* in the other. In the collection of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad (Calcutta), there is a fragment of a seated image of image of Siva in hard black stone, the upper part of which is wanting. Siva is also seen in Champa as the Dvarapala of temples. The best specimen is from Dong-Durong.

What we thus know from the Cham monuments may be supplemented by the evidence of Champa inscriptions. We find no mention of Siva or Śiva worship in the inscription of the descendant of Srivara, which is the earliest epigraphic record in Champa. We, however, know from the time of Bhadravarman I, that is during the fifth century Saka, Siva was worshipped under the name of Bhadresvara. Perhaps human sacrifices were offered to Siva at that time because in one inscription of the same king we read—*Sivadāsa badhyate* (14).

In 709 Saka, the Javanese attacked Champa and burnt down the temple of Siva, known as Bhadrādhīpatiśvara. The original founder of this Siva temple was perhaps Bhadrādhīpati or Bhadra-varman. Champa was not, however, wanting in devotees of Siva, who rebuilt the burnt temple. It was Indravarman who re-erected this temple of Siva and re-named the image *Indra-Bhadresvara*, after his own name. In inscription No. XXIII we read (17) of two other foundations of Indravarman I in honour of Siva, bearing the names of Indrabhogesvara and Indraparamesvara.

(13) H. Sastri—South Indian Images of gods and goddesses p. 79.

(14) Cf. A. Bergaigne—Inscriptions du Campa. All the numbers here given refer to those given in this work.

The predecessor of Indravarman I, Satyavarman had given his name to an image of Siva, viz—*Satya-mukhalinga-deva*. This *Mukha-linga* was afterwards the object of the liberality of Vikrantavarman, to which reference is made in the different inscriptions of the stele of Po-Nagar (No. XXVI). According to inscription No. XXIV, Vikrantavarman also erected other images of Siva by the name of *Vikrānta-Rudresvara* and *Vikrānta-devādhi-Bhadresvara*(15).

Siva's *sakti* is worshipped in Champa under the name of *Umā*. *Umā* is one of the numerous names of Siva's consort. She is also known as Gauri,, Parvatī, Chandī and Kālī. Though in India, we have a large number of *saktas*, the figure of *Umā* is not very common, being usually found only with Mahesvara. There is a good collection of *Umā*-Mahesvara images in the Indian Museum and in the Museums of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad and of the Varendra Research Society. According to the canonical books, the general form of *Umā*, or Gaurī, or Pārvatī, when represented separately, has four hands. She wears a *Jatāmukuta*, her lower hands in the *Varadā* and *Abhayā* postures and upper hands holding red and blue lotuses.

*Umā* Bhagavatī was one of the most popular goddesses of Champa. To her is consecrated the great sanctuary of Po-Nagar at Nhatrang in Champa where her image still exists *in situ*. She maintains her popularity to this day and receives the same worship from the present Anamites, as she used to get from the former Chams. At Po-Nagar, we find the goddess in a sitting posture with legs crossed in Indian fashion and her hands placed on the knees. In her eight hands, she has a knife and cymbal, an arrow and an elephant-tusk, a disc and a folding object, a lance and an arc. The throne is supported by a lotus which may be called a *Padmāsana*(16). M. Aymonier is of opinion that this image of *Umā* is not very old and he places it at A.D. 965(17). The goddess *Umā* is also represented as seated on *Nandin*. An image of *Umā* in this attitude was discovered in the village of Chien-dang in Champa, and is now preserved in the Museum of L'Ecole Francaise at Hanol. In bas-relief of My-son, she is seen standing, in the attitude of dance, with the different emblems the disc, arc, snare, etc., in her hands.

(15) See L'ancien Royaume de Campa dans L'Indo-chine d'après les inscriptions. J. A. 1888 Jan.

(16) See B. E. F. E. O. Tome I p. 15; for a representation of the goddess see fig I.

(17) Aymonier—*Etude Sur les Inscriptions Tchames* p. 27.

Like Siva, Vishnu was also popular in Champa. M. Finot mentions a remarkable instance of the statue of Vishnu, possessing both an epigraphical and an iconographical interest. It was first described by M. Aymonier in 1891. It was popularly believed to bear a Khmer inscription, but it was afterwards found to be a Cham inscription, which was translated by M. Aymonier. It was discovered in the forest of the village of Binh-truoc and eventually removed to the pagoda of Bru-son, where it is impossible to photograph the monument. Vishnu is seated on a stele, wears a *mukuta* and bracelets. He is, according to the Indian fashion, four-armed (*chaturbhujā*). In the upper two hands he holds a *chakra* and a *sankhā*, and *gadā* in the lower two arms. Only the *padma* is wanting.

Another mutilated statue of Vishnu is found at Co-thanh. The figures of Vishnu on garuda are also represented on the bas-relief of My-son. General Cunningham discovered a colossal seated statue of Vishnu at Garhwa, which is like the Champa image. It is six feet high and four feet broad and is made of coarse sandstone. From the inscription on the statue, we can fix its date at the tenth century A.D.(18). Almost all the Bengal images of Vishnu, however, are in the standing posture. Varāhamihira says that the image of Vishnu should be four-armed, as we find in the case of the Champa images. The right hands should hold a club and be in the posture of *sānti* and the left hands a conch and a disc. Our Champa monument complies with these directions. This Champa image of Vishnu, however, is not as graceful as some of its Indian prototypes(19).

Images of Lakshmī, the consort of Vishnu, are not rare in Champa.

Though in India Ganesa is believed to be the destroyer of all evils, he is not much in evidence in Champa.

Both *Nandin*, the steed of Siva and *Garuda*, the steed of Vishnu were adopted in Champa.

*Buddhist Sculptures* :—It is surprising that while Hinduism made such headway, Buddhism, which penetrated so far into China and Japan, could not make much progress in Champa. This may be due to the fact that most of the kings of Champa were Hindus and that they were busy making endowments to Hindu gods and goddesses.

The remains of Buddhist sculptures in Champa show that Buddhism prevailed side by side with Hinduism, though it could not rival the latter.

(18) A. S. R. Vol. III p. 56.

(19) See fig. 4 in B. E. F. E.—O. Tome I.

I-tsing, the great Chinese traveller observed:—"In that country the Buddhists belong generally to the *Arya Sammiti Nikāya*". It is thus clear that the Champa Buddhism belonged to the Mahāyāna school.

At present there are but few Buddhist temples in Champa. At Dong-Durong, a Buddhist temple with four doors was discovered, which may have been a local centre of Buddhism. It was here that the great statue of Buddhism was found. This represents Buddha in a sitting posture, hands on knees. He has a *ushnīsa* on the head, which is unfortunately now separated from the trunk, and an *urna* in the centre. This image is now in the Museum of *L'ecole Francaise d'extreme-Orient* at Hanoi. In the forest near Dong-Durong three Buddhas were found. A head of Buddha was also discovered in the neighbourhood.

A bronze statue of a Bodhisattva, seated in Indian fashion on a *Nāga*, found near Binh-dinh by Mgr. Van Cammelbeke, is also in the Hanoi Museum. Various seals or medallions, used by the Buddhist monks, have been discovered in different places, bearing the images of Buddhist deities or sacred symbols.

All these instances of Hindu and Buddhist sculptures in Champa show clearly that the Champa artists received their inspiration from India. Though good imitators, they were not creative artists, so that their productions became inferior in quality and lacked expressiveness.

This art of Champa, which is Indian in origin and design, but Cham in execution, may be termed Indo-Cham art.

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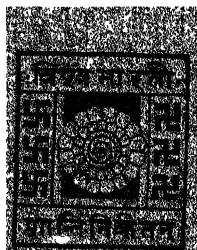
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*By* RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

The standard of living in modern civilization has been raised far higher than the average level of our necessity. The strain, which such rise of standard makes us exert, increases in the beginning our physical and mental alertness. The claim upon our energy, again, accelerates its growth; and this, in its turn, produces activity that expresses itself by the raising of life's standard still higher.

When this standard attains a degree a great deal above the normal, it encourages the passion of greed. The temptation of inordinately high living, normally confined to a negligibly small section of the community, becomes widespread. This ever-growing burden is sure to prove fatal to any civilization, that puts no restraint on the emulation of self-indulgence.

In the geography of our economic world, the ups and downs produced by the inequality of fortune are healthy only within a moderate range. In a country divided by the constant interruption of steep mountains no great civilisation is possible, because therein the natural flow of communication becomes difficult. Large fortunes and luxurious living, like the mountains, form high walls of segregation; they produce worse divisions in society than any physical barriers.

There are some who believe that in the eradication of the idea of property the solution is to be found, for then, and then only, will the communal spirit find its full freedom. But we must know that the urging which has given rise to property, is

something fundamental in human nature. If you have the power, you may tyrannically do violence to all that constitutes property; but you cannot change the constitution of mind itself.

Property is a medium for the expression of our personality. If we look at the negative aspect of this personality, we see in it the limits which separate one person from another. And when, in some men, this sense of separateness takes on an intense emphasis, we call them selfish. But its positive aspect reveals the truth, that it is the only medium through which men can communicate with one another. Therefore, all through the course of human history, men have tried to cultivate the sentiments that give our personality its greatest significance, thereby enabling it to bring us close together in bonds of sympathy.

If we kill our individuality because it is apt to be selfish, then human communion itself loses its meaning. But if we allow it to remain and develop, then being creative by nature, it must fashion its own world. Most often and for most men, property is the only frame that can give a foundation for such creation of a personal world. It is not merely money, not merely furniture; it does not represent merely acquisitiveness, but is an objective manifestation of our taste, our imagination, our constructive faculties, our desire for self-sacrifice.

Through this creative limitation which is our personality, we receive, we give, we express. Our highest social training is to make our property the richest expression of the best in us, of that which is universal, of our individuality whose greatest illumination is love. As individuals are the units that build the community, so property is the unit of wealth that makes for communal prosperity, when it is alive to its function. Our wisdom lies not in destroying separateness of units, but in maintaining the spirit of unity in its full strength.

When life is simple, wealth does not become too exclusive, and individual property finds no great difficulty in acknowledging its communal responsibility, rather, it becomes its vehicle. In former days, in India, public opinion levied heavy taxes upon wealth and most of the public works of the country were voluntarily supported by the rich. The water-supply, medical help, education and amusement were naturally maintained by

men of property through a spontaneous adjustment of mutual obligation. This was made possible, because the limits set to the individual right of self-indulgence were narrow, and surplus wealth easily followed the channel of social responsibility. In such a society, property was the pillar that supported its civilization, and wealth gave opportunity to the fortunate for self-sacrifice.

But with the rise of the standard of living, property changes its aspect. It shuts the gate of hospitality, which is the best means of social intercommunication. It displays its wealth in an extravagance which is self-centred. It begets envy and irreconcilable class division. In short, property becomes anti-social. Because, with what is called material progress, property has become intensely individualistic, the method of gaining it has become a matter of science and not of social ethics. It breaks social bonds; it drains the life sap of the community. Its unscrupulousness plays havoc all over the world, generating forces that can coax or coerce peoples to deeds of injustice and wholesale horror.

The forest-fire feeds upon the living world, from which it springs, till it is completely exhausted along with the fuel. When a passion, like greed, breaks loose from the barrier of social control, it acts in like manner, feeding upon the life of society; and the end is annihilation. It had ever been the object of the spiritual training of man to fight those passions that are anti-social and keep them chained. But lately some abnormal temptation has set them free and they are fiercely devouring all that is affording them shelter.

There are always insects in our harvest field which, in spite of their robbery, leave a sufficient surplus for the tillers of the soil, and it does not pay to try to exterminate them. But when some pest, that has enormous powers of self-multiplication, attacks our food crop, it has to be dealt with as a calamity. In human society, in normal circumstances, there are a number of causes that make for wastage, yet it does not cost us too much to ignore them. But to-day the blight, that has fallen on our social life and its resources, is disastrous, because it is not restricted to

limited regions. It is an epidemic of voracity that has infected the total area of civilization.

We all now-a-days claim our right of freedom to be extravagant in our enjoyment, to the extent that we can afford it. Not to be able to waste as much upon individual gratification, as my rich neighbour does, merely proves a poverty of which I am ashamed, and against which my womenfolk and my parasites are permitted to cherish their grievance. Ours has become a society in which, through its tyrannical standard of respectability, all the members are goading one another to spoil themselves to the uttermost limit.

There is a continual screwing up of the ideal of convenience and comfort, the results of which, however, inevitably fall short of the energy spent, by reason of the wastage involved. The very shriek of advertisement itself, which must constantly accompany the progress of production, means the squandering of an immense quantity of material and life force, and merely helps to swell the sweepings of time.

Civilisation to-day has turned into a vast catering establishment. It maintains constant feasts for a whole population of gluttons. The intemperance, which could safely have been tolerated in a few, has spread its contagion to the multitude. The universal greed, produced as a consequence, is the cause of the meanness, cruelty and lies, in politics and commerce, that vitiate the whole human atmosphere. A civilisation with such an unnatural appetite must depend for its existence upon numberless victims, and these are being sought in those parts of the world where human flesh is cheap. In Asia and Africa a bartering goes on, whereby the future hope and happiness of entire peoples are sold for the sake of providing fastidious fashion with an endless train of respectable rubbish.

The consequence of such material and moral drain is more evident when one studies the conditions manifested in the fatness of the cities and the physical and mental anæmia of the villages, almost everywhere in the world. For cities have become inevitably important. They represent energy and materials concentrated for the satisfaction of that exaggerated appetite, which is the characteristic symptom of modern civilization. Such abnormal

devouring process cannot be carried on, unless certain parts of the social body conspire and organize to feed upon the whole. This is suicidal; but, before its progressive degeneracy ends in death, the disproportionate enlargement of the particular section looks formidably great, and conceals the starved pallor of the entire body,—the sacrifice of the great maintaining the small in its enormity, and creating for the time being an illusion of wealth.

The living relationship, in a physical or social body, is the sympathetic mutuality of help among its members and organs, whereby a perfect balance of communication between them is maintained, so that the consciousness of unity is not obstructed. The resulting health and wealth are of secondary importance,—the unity is ultimate in itself. The perfect rhythm of reciprocity which generates and maintains this unity is disturbed whenever some ambition of power establishes its dominance in life's republic.

What in the West is called democracy can never be true in a society where greed grows, uncontrolled, encouraged, even admired by the populace. In such an atmosphere, a constant struggle goes on among individuals to capture public organizations for the satisfaction of their own personal ambition, and democracy becomes like an elephant whose one purpose in life is to give joy rides to the clever and the rich.

In this kind of Body politic, the organs of information and expression, through which opinions are manufactured, together with the machinery of administration, are all openly or secretly manipulated by those prosperous few, who have been compared of old to the camel, which can never pass through a needle's eye,—the gate that leads to the kingdom of ideals. Such a society necessarily becomes inhospitable and suspicious, and callously cruel against those who preach their faith in spiritual freedom. In such a society, people are intoxicated through the constant stimulation of what they call progress, a progress which they are willing to buy at the cost of civilization itself, like the man for whom wine has more attraction than food.

Villages are like women. In their keeping is the cradle of the race. They are nearer to nature than towns; and are therefore in closer touch with the fountain of life. They have the



atmosphere which possesses a natural power of healing. It is the function of the village, like that of woman, to provide people with their elemental needs, with food and joy, with the simple poetry of life, and with those ceremonies of beauty which the village spontaneously produces and in which she finds delight. But when constant strain is put upon her through the extortionate claim of ambition; when her resources are exploited through the excessive stimulus of temptation, then she becomes poor in life, her mind becomes dull and uncreative; and from her time-honoured position of the wedded partner of the city, she is degraded to that of maid-servant. While, in its turn, the city, in its intense egotism and pride, remains unconscious of the devastation it constantly works upon the very source of its life and health and joy.

Those who are familiar with the Hindu Pantheon know that in our mythology there is a demi-god named Kuvera, similar in character to Mammon. He represents the multiplication of money whose motive force is greed. His figure is ugly and gross with its protuberant belly, comic in its vulgarity of self-exaggeration. He is the genius of property that knows no moral responsibility. But the goddess, Lakshmi, who is the Deity of Prosperity, is beautiful. For prosperity is for all. It dwells in that property which, though belonging to the individual, generously owns its obligation to the community. Lakshmi is seated on a lotus, the lotus which is the symbol of the universal heart. It signifies that she presides over that wealth which means happiness for all men, which is hospitable.

By some ill-luck, Lakshmi has been deprived of her lotus throne in the present age, and Kuvera is worshipped in her place. Modern cities represent his protuberant stomach, and ugliness reigns unashamed. About one thing we have to be reminded, that there is no cause for rejoicing in the fact that this ugliness has an enormous power of growth and that it is prolific of its progeny. Its growth is not true progress; it is a disease which keeps the body swelling while it is being killed.

The sunshine that is diffuse maintains life in a whole forest of trees; and the sunshine of wealth is symbolised in Lakshmi. The sunshine, when it is focussed through a burning glass on a narrow spot, can reduce the same forest of trees to ashes; this

hungry fire of concentrated wealth is symbolised in Kuvera, and he is the presiding deity of our modern cities.

Modern cities are continually growing bigger only because no central spirit of Unity exercises vital control over their growth of dimension. There can be no end to their addition of hugeness, because their object is not to modulate human relationships into some beauty of truth, but to gain convenience.

When in the Sanskrit poem, *Meghaduta*, we follow the path of the cloud messenger and in imagination pass over the old-world towns mentioned in it, with their beautiful names, we feel that the poet in reciting them was giving voice to his hungering delight of some remembrance; we instinctively know that these towns expressed more than anything else the love and hope of man, treasuring some of the splendour of his soul in their houses and temples with their auspicious decoration daily accomplished by women, and even in the picturesque bartering that went on in their market places.

We can imagine what Delhi and Agra must have been in the time to which they belonged. They manifested in their development some creatively human aspect of a great empire. Whatever might have been its character, these cities even in their decay still retain in their magnificence the true product of the self-respect of man. But modern cities merely give opportunities, not ideals.

Cities there must be in man's civilisation, just as in higher organisms there must be organised centres of life, such as the brain, heart, or stomach. These never overwhelm the living wholeness of the body; on the contrary, by a perfect federation of their functions, they maintain its richness. But a tumour round which the blood is congested, is the enemy of the whole body upon which it feeds as it swells. Our modern cities, in the same way feed upon the whole social organism that runs through the villages; they continually drain away the life stuff of the community, and slough off a huge amount of dead matter, while assuming a lurid counterfeit of prosperity.

Thus, unlike a living heart, these cities imprison and kill the blood and create poison centres filled with the accumulation of death. When a very large body of men comes together for the

sake of some material purpose, then it is as a congestion and not a congregation. When men are close together and yet develop no intimate bond of human relationship, there ensues moral putrefaction. Wherever in the world, this modern civilization is spreading its dominion, the life principle of society, which is the principle of personal relationship, is injured at the root.

All this is the result of an almost complete substitution of true civilization by what the West calls Progress. I am never against progress, but when, for its sake, civilization is ready to sell its soul, then I choose to remain primitive in my material possessions, hoping to achieve my civilization in the realm of the spirit.

People, as a whole, do and must live in the village, for it is their natural habitation. But the professions depend upon their special appliances and environment, and therefore barricade themselves with particular purposes, shutting out the greater part of universal nature, which is the cradle of life. The city, in all civilizations, represents this professionalism,—some concentrated purpose of the people. That is to say, people have their home in the village and their offices in the city.

We all know that the office is for serving and enriching the home, and not for banishing it into insignificance. But we also know that when, goaded by greed, the gambling spirit gets hold of a man, he is willing to rob his home of all its life and joy and to pour them into the hungry jaws of the office. For a time such a man may prosper, but his prosperity is gained at the cost of happiness. His wife may shine in a blaze of jewelry, rousing envy along the path of her economic triumph, but her spirit withers in secret, thirsting for love and the simple delights of life.

Society encourages the professions only because they are of service to the people at large. They find their truth when they belong to the people. But the professions, because they get all power into their hands, begin to believe that people live to maintain them. Thus we often see that a lawyer thrives by taking advantage of the weaknesses of his clients, their helpless dread of loss, their dishonest love of gain. The proportion between the help rendered and its reward demanded, loses its

legitimate limit, when it is not guided by any standard of social ethics.

Such a moral perversion has come to its extreme length to-day in the relationship of the city and the village. The city, which is the professional aspect of society, has gradually come to believe that the village is its legitimate field for exploitation, that the village must at the cost of its own life maintain the city in all its brilliance of luxuries and excesses; that its wealth must be magnified even though that should involve the bankruptcy of happiness.

True happiness is not at all expensive, because it depends upon that natural spring of beauty and life which is harmony of relationship. Ambition pursues its path of self-seeking by breaking this bond of harmony, cutting gaps, creating dissensions. It feels no hesitation in trampling under foot the harvest field, which is for all, in order to snatch away in haste the object of its craving. To-day this ambition, wasteful and therefore disruptive of social life, the greatest enemy of civilization, has usurped the helm of society.

In India we had our family system, large and complex, each family a miniature society in itself. I do not wish to discuss the question of its desirability. But its rapid decay in the present day clearly points out the nature and process of the principle of destruction which is at work in modern civilization. When life was simple and its needs normal, when selfish passions were under control, such a domestic system was perfectly natural and fully productive of happiness. The family resources were sufficient for all and the claims on them were never excessive on the part of one or more of its individual members. But such a group can never survive, if the personal ambition of a single member begins separately to clamour for a great deal more than is necessary for him. When emulation in augmenting private possession, and the enjoyment of exclusive advantage runs ahead of the common good and general happiness, the bond of harmony, which is the bond of sustenance, must give way and brothers must separate, nay, even become enemies.

The passion that rages in the heart of modern civilization is, like a volcanic flame, constantly struggling to throw up eruptions

of individual bloatedness. The stream of production, which thereupon gushes forth, may give one the impression of a huge, if indefinite, gain. But such interruption needs must disturb man's creative mind. We forget that it is only the spirit of creation evolving out of its own inner abundance, that adds to our true wealth; and that the spirit of production but consumes our resources in the process of building and filling its storehouses. Therefore our needs which stimulate production must observe the limits of the normal. If we go on poking them into a bigger and bigger flame, the conflagration will no doubt dazzle our sight, but its splendour will leave on its debit side a black heap of charred remains.

When our wants are moderate, the rations we claim do not exhaust the common store of nature and the pace of their restoration does not hopelessly fall behind that of our consumption of them. This moderation, moreover, leaves us leisure to cultivate happiness, the happiness which is the artist soul of the human world, creating beauty of form and rhythm of life. But man to-day forgets that the divinity in him is revealed by the halo of his happiness.

The Germany of the period of Goethe was considered to be poor by the Germany of the period of Bismarck. Possibly the standard of civilization, illumined by the mind of Plato, or by the life of the Emperor Asoka, is under-rated by the proud children of modern times who compare it with the present age of progress, an age dominated by millionaires, diplomats and war-lords. Many things that are of common use to-day were absolutely lacking in those days. But are those who lived then to be pitied by the young boys of our time, who have more of the printing press, but less of the mind?

I often imagine that the moon, being smaller in size than the earth, begat life on her soil earlier than was possible on that of her companion. Once, she too had her constant festival of colour, music, movement; her storehouse was perpetually replenished with food for her children who were already there and who were to come. Then in course of time, some race was born to her, gifted with a furious energy of intelligence, which began greedily to devour its surroundings. It produced beings, who, because of

the excess of their animal spirit coupled with intellect lacked the imagination to realize that the mere process of addition did not create fulfilment; that acquisition because of its bigness did not produce happiness; that movement did not constitute progress merely because of its velocity; that progress could have meaning only in relation to some ideal of completeness. Through machinery of tremendous power, they made such an addition to their natural capacity for gathering and holding, that their career of plunder outstripped nature's power of recuperation. Their profit-makers created wants which were unnatural and dug big holes in the stored capital of nature, forcibly to extract provision for them. When they had reduced the limited store of material, they waged furious wars among their different sections for the special allotment of the lion's share. In their scramble for the right of self-indulgence they laughed at moral law and took it to be a sign of racial superiority to be ruthless in the satisfaction of their desires. They exhausted the water, cut down the trees, reduced the surface of the planet into a desert riddled with pits. They made its interior a rifled pocket, emptied of its valuables. At last one day, like a fruit whose pulp has been completely eaten by insects which it sheltered, the moon became a lifeless shell, a universal grave for the voracious creatures who had consumed the world to which they were born.

My imaginary selenites behaved exactly in the way that human beings are behaving on this earth, fast exhausting the stores of sustenance not because they must live their normal life, but because they strain their capacity to live to a pitch of monstrous excess. Mother Earth has enough for the healthy appetite of her children and something extra for rare cases of abnormality. But she has not nearly enough for the sudden growth of a whole world of spoilt and pampered children.

Man has been digging holes into the very foundations, not only of his livelihood, but also of his life; he is feeding upon his own body. The reckless wastage of humanity which ambition produces, is best seen in the villages, where the light of life is being dimmed, the joy of existence dulled, the natural threads of social communion snapped every day. It should be our mission to restore the full circulation of life's blood into these maltreated

limbs of society ; to bring to the villages health and knowledge ; wealth of space in which to live ; wealth of time in which to work and to rest and to enjoy ; respect which will give them dignity ; sympathy which will make them realize their kinship with the world of men, and not merely their servient position.

**Streams, lakes and oceans** are there on this earth. They exist not for the hoarding of water exclusively within their own areas. They send up the vapour which forms into clouds and helps towards a wider distribution of water. Cities have their functions of maintaining wealth and knowledge in concentrated forms of opulence, but this also, should not be for their own sake ; they should be centres of irrigation ; they should gather in order to distribute ; they should not magnify themselves, but should enrich the entire commonwealth. They should be like lamp-posts, and the light they support must transcend their own limits.

Such a relationship of mutual benefit between the city and the village can remain strong only so long as the spirit of co-operation and self-sacrifice is a living ideal in society. When some universal temptation overcomes this ideal, when some selfish passion gains ascendancy, then a gulf is formed and goes on widening between them ; then the mutual relationship of city and village becomes that of exploiter and victim. This is a form of perversity whereby the body-politic becomes its own enemy and whose termination is death.

We have started in India, in connection with our Visva-bharati, work of village reconstruction, the mission of which is to retard this process of race suicide. If I try to give you the details of our work, they will look small. But we are not afraid of this appearance of smallness, for we have confidence in life. We know that if as a seed it represents the truth that is in us, it will overcome opposition on and conquer space and time. According to us, the poverty problem is not the most important, the problem of unhappiness is the great problem. Wealth, which is the synonym for the production and collection of things, men can make use of ruthlessly. They can crush life out of the earth and flourish. But, happiness, which may not compete with wealth in its list of materials, is final, it is creative ; therefore it has its source of riches within itself.

Our object is to try to flood the choked bed of village life with the stream of happiness. For this the scholars, the poets, the musicians, the artists, have to collaborate, to offer their contributions. Otherwise they must live like parasites, sucking life from the people and giving nothing back to them. Such exploitation gradually exhausts the soil of life, which needs constant replenishing, by the return to it of life, through the completion of the cycle of receiving and giving back.

Most of us, who try to deal with the poverty problem, think of nothing but a greater intensive effort of production, forgetting that this only means a greater exhaustion of materials as well as of humanity. This only means giving exaggerated opportunity for profit to a few, at the cost of the many. It is food which nourishes, not money; it is fulness of life which makes one happy, not fulness of purse. Multiplying materials intensifies the inequality between those who have and those who have not, and this deals a fatal wound to the social system, through which the whole body is eventually bled to death.



**THE VOICE.**

BY TSEMOU-HSU.

The Voice has been sounded;  
The thousand peaks stand  
                    in awe-stricken silence,  
Awaiting the Grand Echo,  
                    from their very heart,  
Which will shake with loud music  
All the spaces around them.

## W. W. PEARSON.

*A Memoir.*

By C. F. ANDREWS.

The difficulty of writing anything adequate about William Winstanley Pearson has so grown upon me, as I have tried to shape my thoughts, that again and again I have torn up what I have written in despair. When I first knew him, he had reached the prime of manhood, with all his own peculiar characteristics and his purpose in life already marked out. India had won his heart; whatever gifts he had were to be devoted to her service. His passionate devotion to India had always about it something of a lover; and when the news came that, in his last illness, while he was lying unconscious, he had murmured in his pain: "My one and only love,—India," it was not difficult to understand the cry; for it was a life-long passion with him, and a devotion that was stronger than death.

He had spoken to me more than once about marriage. Those who knew him and loved him best had impressed upon him the rare possibilities of a married life for a nature so gifted with affection as his. But though he thought long over the idea and came back to it in his own mind again and again, he seemed to shrink and hesitate. India was to him 'a thing enskied' and he worshipped at her feet. I do not know if his domestic life could have ever contained such another romance: and this first love for India of the passionate lover grew stronger, not weaker, as the end drew near.

A story, which has just reached me from Japan, has moved me more deeply than anything else I have heard about him since the time when the news came about his death; for it brought his highly sensitive and deeply reserved nature vividly before me. One day, in a time of convalescence in Japan, after long bouts of sickness, the mail from India came into his hands, while he was speaking with an English friend. An inexpressible look lighted up the whole of his face, and he said to his friend, with a voice that trembled to the verge of tears, 'Could you leave me now? I want to read these letters alone.' This was during one of those

times of physical weakness and absence from India when his own heart's longings could not be fulfilled.

Many years before that, a similar experience of the depth of this passionate love was revealed in a flash to me, and it gave me the first clear insight into his character. He had come home from Calcutta, his health apparently shattered. But his bodily sufferings were as nothing compared with his spiritual pain of unrest. For the doctors had warned him, saying it was unlikely that he would ever be well enough to return to India. Shortly after that time (in the summer of 1912) I was in England, and we had both of us met the poet, Rabindranath Tagore. For William Pearson, the poet was the embodiment of all that he loved in India itself. The longing to return, which had been never absent, had increased a thousand fold after this first meeting with the poet, and the home-sickness for India was evident in his eyes whenever he spoke of Bengal.

Now it happened, that I knew of a tutorship vacant for the cold weather months in Delhi and felt certain that the doctors would not forbid him going out for this cold season. Therefore, instead of asking him to consider the pros and cons of it, a sudden resolution came to me; and greatly venturing, I booked his passage and came to him, holding the steamer ticket in my hand. My very first words to him were: "Here is your passage booked and you sail on October 15th!" When he realised what I had done, his eyes danced with excitement. In a moment he seemed to throw off, like a heavy weight, all the bodily pains, which had bent him down miserably before. His happiness, during the next two months and on board the ship and after he had landed, was infectious. He could not keep it to himself: it overflowed. From the moment that his face was set towards India, he rapidly recovered.

His home in England, in a different sense, was always equally dear. But it was a different love,—a steady deep ever constant affection which had grown up with him from infancy. This love for his home was of the texture of his life itself. But the love for India was always a thing apart,—unearthly, romantic,—finding its truth in the realm of imagination and receiving its corroboration in the hearts of his Indian friends. These

all loved him with a single-hearted sincerity as they understood the unique devotion of this love for India that encompassed and encircled his heart.

Among these Indian friends of his own age there was this striking feature, that each of them appeared to occupy the whole of his heart and mind, and to be loved individually with a singular love, as if he were the only friend; yet their number was by no means small, and each one had a character of his own. It was a rare gift indeed. After the news came about his death, those who had known him so intimately wrote to me saying, that the greatest influence for good which they had ever known had been taken away. "My one and only friend is no more," wrote one to me.

In the later years of his life when I knew him best, it was always with Indians that these new friendships arose which stirred his own nature to its very depths. In Japan, it had been his one regret, that he had found this intimacy of friendship infinitely hard to reach. Perhaps he scarcely realised how much his longing for love was being returned: for the response in Japan is different from that in India,—it is always more reserved. He never spoke to me of any Japanese friend in the same way that he spoke of those who loved him in Bengal.

I think, but I am not quite certain, that there was one other distinctive feature in these Indian friendships. Though not exclusively such, yet they were far more easy for him to form with those who were Bengalis than with those of any other race. The Bengali temperament, which is so high in artistic qualities and in intellectual and imaginative force, had a commanding attraction for him. He had learnt the Bengali language and it was a pure delight for him to talk with those whose mother tongue it was. But the delight went far beyond this common tie of speech. Their music, their arts, their literature, their intellectual gifts all fascinated him and called forth his highest admiration. The charm of their domestic life, with its many endearing relationships, also gave him deep and permanent satisfaction. He was never tired of talking over with me the singular beauty of these relationships, which comprise every member of the household including the domestic servants. He said to me once: "What

a wonderful civilisation must be behind all this ! And what a Fine Art domestic affection truly becomes in such households !”

I must break off, at this point, to speak of his own taste for art and music and science. It is easy for me to recall the amused glee, with which he came back, after his voice had been tried by the kindly music teacher of the Asram, with whom he was a special favourite, and how he told the poet with much triumph in his voice that he had been given a ‘first class’ singing certificate. His laughter was due to the fact, that, though he had excellent taste both in music and in art, he had only the skill of an amateur ; he had never undergone the rigour of serious training. I think it just possible, that he could have become a really good musician, if he had studied and practised from childhood : but his life was too many-sided.

He took up science, not really because his heart was in it,—though here again he did valuable work, and his study of the Evolutionary Theory, which gained him his B.Sc. Degree was highly praised. But Science was not with him a life-long enthusiasm filling all his thoughts. Indeed, he was so extraordinarily varied in his gifts, that it would have been hardly possible for him to carry any one of them out to its completion without neglecting others. Therefore, each of them used to win his almost undivided attention, in its turn, as the mood seized him.

I can remember, at Delhi, the way in which he used literally to *slave* away at his Bengali, as though nothing in the world were of any importance except to translate correctly Rabindranath Tagore’s writings into English. Then, on a visit to France, he would suddenly discover that all depended on his learning French quickly. In a last letter from Switzerland, he told me with a boyish pleasure how he had talked for over three hours in French with M. Romain Rolland in Villeneuve. In Japan, his whole attention would be absorbed in Japanese masterpieces of drawing and painting ; and to discover an original by a great master in some second hand curio shop would give him endless delight. He would speak of it for days afterwards and display his purchase to every one in the party explaining and receiving their congratulation.

I have thought long over the question as to what was his greatest gift, amid all this bewildering variety of talents. It did not lie in anything he had learnt from books, or studied in academic circles, or practised as a profession. It was his genius for making and preserving friendships,—the infinite attraction of his whole personality for all who delighted to know him,—that made Willie Pearson unique. The mention of his name brought a gleam of light to the eyes in every circle wherein he moved. In India, where racial feelings have grown strong of late, no one ever thought of him as a foreigner or an intruder. He was made a welcome member of every family where he stayed; and it was always his greatest wish and happiness to dwell in Indian homes. In every possible way, he would conform to their manners and dress and customs; and he would always do his utmost, with infinite care, to put those who were entertaining him entirely at their ease.

I am aware that I have been speaking all the while about his relationships with grown up people and with family circles, and about the still wider horizon of his love for India itself. But even while I have been doing this, I have also been trying to pass on further to the one love which brought out all his gifts most perfectly,—his love of children. Here was his supreme happiness, if to be happy is to forget self entirely in others. A group of children, with him in their midst, became at once filled with extraordinary animation and excitement.

His classes were like the buzzing of bees round a hive. Each boy was eagerly wishing to get in his answer first. In our open air life at Santiniketan, this noise in class was possible. For he took his boys under a tree where there was ample space all round and no other class was near that might be disturbed. But in a school room, the clamour caused by the intense excitement would have been deafening. More full of joy to the boys, even than his classes, were the rambles which he took with them for 'nature study.' One further form of teaching must be mentioned,—the acting of plays. He had a dramatic gift and a beautiful voice for recitation. In the last term of his teaching at the Asram, he had taught the boys to act in a play; and the pleasure that he gave to those young actors will not soon be forgotten.

It will be noticed, that I have said nothing hitherto of the years, when he was working as a missionary in the London Missionary Society, at Bhowanipur, Calcutta. In those days I had not yet made his acquaintance, though I had often heard about him. The fact is, he spoke to me very little indeed about that period of his life; and there can be no question that he had not then discovered his proper sphere. His own peculiar gifts could not find scope amid the routine work of an old established mission, whose conventional lines had been laid down long ago. He did not feel there that spirit of freedom, which was the very breath of his life. It was clear, I think, to every one—as it became clear to himself—that his own work in India and for India could only be done, when he was entirely the master of his own time and his own method. It was here that the school of the Poet, Rabindranath Tagore, so exactly fulfilled this full ideal of freedom. It was a *poet's* school, not a conventional educational institution. The poet's genius was written all over it, and freedom was its watchword.

Many have anxiously asked me to what extent this freedom, which he sought and found under Rabindranath Tagore, had meant any weakening of his hold on the essentials of his Christian Faith. As one who knew him very intimately indeed, during the later years of his life, I can say with confidence, that each step forward into this freedom, which the poet's school gave him, was a help rather than a hindrance to his realisation of the Christian life; and that each step was taken consciously by him with this object in view. It enabled him (if I may so express it) to live more fully and simply the Christian life than any other career could do. By all his many Indian friends, it was entirely understood in that sense; and it always definitely implied to them that conscious Christian purpose. They looked upon him as an almost ideal Christian, and saw in his daily life just what they could imagine Christ Himself to be.

I must pause here to explain a point that he talked over with me very many times. He had found it, he said, the most difficult thing in the world to be a true Christian in India. It was not enough to live the conventional Anglo-Indian life; for this was bound up with much that could not, in his opinion, truly represent

Christ to others. He felt that the missionary societies had become almost inevitably involved in this conventional standard of Christian living and thinking. Therefore, as one whose single-hearted daily endeavour was to try to become more and more in India a true Christian, he found it necessary at last, after a very painful struggle, to set himself free from every external bond, so that he might seek to realise the Christian ideal in his own way. He never judged those who took a different path; but he felt that he had to follow out his own life purpose.

It has to be realised, that he was not an ordinary person. He had genius of a very high order. If this genius of his had been simply that of a writer, he might perhaps have endured a certain amount of external bondage, so long as his own thoughts and ideas might travel freely. But his peculiar genius consisted in friendship; that is to say, it was bound up with every smallest aspect of the daily life itself. To realise to the full this special kind of genius, freedom was absolutely necessary. When he obtained that freedom, in Rabindranath Tagore's school, he was radiantly happy. Before that time, both in London and at Bhowanipur, he felt that he had not got the scope he required and he was unhappy.

One thing more I wish to make plain. It was through the expression of his own genius for friendship in action that he found Christ, and learnt more and more the inner meaning of Christ. Perhaps the most fundamental of all his convictions, the bed-rock of faith on which his own character was built, was his belief, that, by humbly waiting upon God in prayer and silence and meditation, the answer would be given by the Divine Spirit's inspiration and direction. This faith in him was very strong indeed. He would wait, as I know well, for the Divine Spirit's guidance of his life, even in little things of daily moment; and in the larger issues, which involved the whole future, he would not venture to take action, till, after days of patient waiting, he felt in his innermost heart a 'concern' (so he used to describe it to me, in the language of the Quakers); and he would explain to me, that he had learnt this habit of seeking direct guidance from his mother's knee. For she had been brought up in the Society of Friends, and had



inherited this faith as a great tradition, which she had practised in her own life and taught to her own children.

His own Christian belief was simple and child-like and direct. He was not, as far as I am aware, greatly troubled by intellectual doubts or metaphysical questions. His troubles were rather those which were concerned with conduct,—how to follow Christ truly. There was a New Testament Class, which he used to take right up to the end of those who, of their own accord, wished to learn the New Testament from him. In taking this class I noticed that he was wont to be somewhat uncritical in his exposition. He took the narrative just as he found it, and went straight to its inner meaning, not concerning himself about the criticism of the text.

This temperament made him accept many of the stories of Hinduism in the same manner. He delighted in their inner beauty, and always tried to penetrate below the surface to their spiritual meaning. Of all the people, whom I have intimately known and loved, I think that he would come nearest of all the fulfilling in his daily life and thoughts the words of St. Paul, at the end of his great letter to those Philippian Christians, who were so near to St. Paul's own heart :—

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true,  
 Whatsoever things are honest,  
 Whatsoever things are just,  
 Whatsoever things are pure,  
 Whatsoever things are lovely,  
 Whatsoever things are of good report,  
 If there be any virtue,  
 If there be any praise,  
 Think of these things,  
 And the God of Peace shall be with you.

For with that generous and warm-hearted chivalry towards other creeds, which was a part of his very nature, and more than anything else perhaps the secret of his genius for friendship, he would always think the best of them and seek to penetrate below the surface to the good that lay beneath. In this way, I truly believe, he was performing a Christ-like work, and setting up a

standard, which will be a rallying point for many true Christ-lovers in the future, who have been pained and grieved by much that has been controversially said and done in Christ's name in the East.

His admiration for Buddhism, as he read its past history and saw its wonderful achievements in India and in other lands, became very deep indeed. All that he loved, as being truly Christ-like, appeared to him to be found in varying degree in this pre-Christian movement, which had so deeply stirred man's spirit. In Japan, where Buddhism is still a living creed, he paid great reverence to the gentle Buddhist priests, with whom he came in contact. They formed, perhaps, his nearest means of approach to an understanding of the inner heart of Japan.

It was the same, in India, with Hinduism and Islam. He would always see the best of these religions and think the best of them, in accordance with the golden rule of Christ, who said : "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them : for this is the Law and the Prophets."

In his many journeys abroad with me to foreign lands, this attitude of appreciation was very marked ; and it was a great lesson to me in Christian charity. I have very often thought, when I watched his perfect courtesy to foreigners, who did not understand him and whose manner were sometimes repugnant to him, how greatly his Christian charity overcame any natural dislike. The words of the Apostle : "Charity beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things ; charity never faileth," were abundantly true with him. His charity never failed. His greatest difficulty was to endure the sight of some injustice or rudeness done by one of his own countrymen to those of another race. Then, sometimes, his indignation blazed forth.

This brings me to a point, where I would on no account wish to be misunderstood : for the mistake, if made, would be fundamental. His was not at all one of those kindly, indulgent, easy-going characters, that loves to be a friend of all the world by simple kindness and good nature. Willie Pearson had something of a volcano in him, which he found difficult beyond words to control. At times, it would break out and get beyond him. He spent his whole life in seeking to control it ; and the long hours

which he used to give daily to silence and quiet and meditation had often this end in view. In the presence of God, he had found peace; and wherever the irritation at some wrong became too great to bear, he would retire and compose himself before he came back into the outer world. I have seen him do this so many times, that I can understand the stern self-discipline that it needed.

It was very rarely indeed that this indignation blazed forth against something that was inconsiderately mistaken by him for a wrong or an evil. If that ever occurred, he was the first to come forward and make amends: indeed he would run to do so. But the times that I remember most clearly were those, when some hypocrisy needed to be exposed, or when some cruelty to the weak had occurred in his own presence. Then, I have seen his eyes flash; and I have realised something of what it must have looked like, to watch Christ's own indignation at the sight of cruelty or hypocrisy. I have known also then that what it truly meant, that Christ championed the outcast and the despised, and stood on their side, even when His own character was defamed, and how He was called the 'friend of publicans and sinners.' Willie Pearson tried to follow Christ there.

In the formation and growth of such a character as this, it has been possible for me to appreciate the meaning and purpose of the long discipline of pain both in his early manhood and later years so bravely borne; the long discipline of silence and meditation self-imposed, but equally necessary for the moulding of his nature. It has been made easier for me also to understand what was the divine purpose in the sudden accident on the railway, together with those long-drawn weary days of suffering at the last, so chivalrously endured with a smile, and his death just as he had reached the height of all his powers. If Christ, as we read in one of the New Testament epistles 'was made perfect though suffering', we may surely be thankful to God that this disciple, who sought to follow Christ so closely, was counted worthy to suffer for Christ's name. He too, like his Master, was made perfect through suffering.

## THE EDICTS OF ASOKA.

By PROFESSOR J. N. SAMADDAR.

MR. H. G. Wells, when asked in an interview about the six Greatest Men in History, spoke of Asoka, among all the thousands of kings, expcrors, and majesties, great and little, as shining almost alone, a star. Asoka, indeed occupies a unique place in the gallery of greatest kings known to history.

With reference to his immortal edicts the general idea is that they were meant only for the "long endurance" of the Good Law of Picty—the Dhamma. I will try to show, however, that not only from the point of view of religion but from other points of view,—political, social, and economic,—the edicts give us a fairly clear picture of ancient India in the "golden age" of the Imperial Mauryas.

I shall first draw attention to some of these edicts from the social point of view.

Duty to parents and superiors along with sanctity of animal life, was of course, one of the cardinal doctrines of the edicts,—we find it repeated in many of them. In the second Minor Rock Edict, Father and Mother were to be harkened to, an injunction which was repeated in the Third and Fourth Rock Edict "for that was an excellent thing," as well as in the Eleventh and Thirteenth. Similiarly, duty to teachers was inculcated in Rock Edict II, as well as Edict IX, while it was also enjoined that fitting courtesy was to be shown to relations whose unseemly behaviour was increasing.

Due reverence is to be paid to superiors, but this does not indicate that slaves and servants are not to be accorded proper treatment. Rock Edict IX inculcates this doctrine. Indeed, if I may be permitted to digress, I would assert that slavery, though of course in existence, was not regarded as very humiliating, the general condition of a slave not being a hard one.

Chanakya lays down in the Arthasastra that "employing a slave to carry the dead or to sweep; or giving a slave the leavings of food; keeping a slave naked; or hurting or abusing him; or violating the chastity of a female slave shall cause the forfeiture of the value paid." Slaves could enjoy private property and,

what was more, anything which a slave earned, without prejudice to his master's work, was the slave's property. The slave's property after his death was to go to his kinsmen, the master getting it only in the event of the slave having no kinsmen. There were again special regulations for boy-slaves, less than eight years of age, who could not be mortgaged or sold in a foreign land, neither could such a slave be employed in mean avocations. A slaves could obtain liberty on paying the value for which he was enslaved and after that he could regain his Aryahood.

Respect for living creatures, *i.e.*, sanctity of animal life was naturally one of the cardinal doctrines of the great Buddhist King. We find in the Edicts the successive stages of his growing enthusiasm for his favourite doctrine, beginning from the stopping of slaughter in the royal kitchen, till, after twenty six years (Pillar Edict), he laid down an elaborate code practically prohibiting the slaughter of animals. Evidently Asoka had this sanctity of animal life in view when he made healing arrangements for men as well as for lower animals (Girnar Rock Edict). Medicinal herbs, wheresoever lacking, were imported and cultivated; on the roads, wells were dug, and trees planted; for the use of both man and beast.

Mr. Vincent Smith in this connection observes that "The sanctity attaching to the life of the most insignificant insect was not extended to the life of man" (Asoka, P. 58). This view is surely both narrow and unworthy. The explanation of the stress laid on the animal is obvious. No importance had been attached to animal life during the previous Hindu regime. On the contrary, as we find clearly mentioned in the Fourth Rock Edict, "For a long period past, even for many hundred years, have increased the sacrificial slaughter of living creatures, the killing of animate beings," and it was therefore, only in the fitness of things that the great Buddhist King who wanted to inculcate *ahimsá*, should put a certain emphasis on the saving of animal life which had been neglected previously. But that does not imply in any way that such sanctity was not extended to the life of man—God's highest and noblest creation. Rather, the sympathy of Asoka for his suffering fellow creatures, both man and animal, find adequate expression in the provision to which we have already

referred for the healing of man and beast not only throughout his vast empire, but even in the kingdoms of his friends (Rock Edict II).

Tolerance, was the characteristic and basic ideal of the great Emperor. Liberality towards ascetics and Brahmins was inculcated in the Ninth Rock Edict—a doctrine repeated in Edict XII which points out that “the sects of other people all deserve reverence for one reason or another. By thus acting a man exalts his own sect, and at the same time does service to the sects of other people. By acting contrariwise a man hurts his own sect, and does disservice to the sects of other people. For he who does reverence to his own sect, while disparaging the sects of others, wholly from attachment to his own, with intent to enhance its splendour, in reality by such conduct inflicts the severest injury on his own sect”.

While lavishing his treasure chiefly on Buddhist shrines and monasteries, he did not hesitate to spend large sums in hewing out of hard rocks, spacious cave-dwellings, or *Ajivikas*, not even grudging the expense of polishing the interiors like so many mirrors; and there can be no doubt that liberal benefactions were bestowed likewise on the Jains and Brahmins. (Kashmir tradition preserves the name of Brahmanical temples built or restored by Asoka). In his Rock Edict, Asoka expresses his desire that persons professing all shades of belief may live anywhere they like; for, says the King. “All of them aim at self-control and purity of mind.”

The word *Palikilesam* occurs in the Dhauli Edict. Dhauli is a very important place in our Province, having been identified with Tosali, one of the provincial capitals of Asoka. This Edict inscribed in his 14th and 15th regnal year was addressed to the High Officers administering the town. Mr. V. A. Smith referring to this word has translated it into “bodily torture” and come to the conclusion that, “it is clear that Asoka maintained the ferocious criminal code of the *Arthashastra* and his grandfather.”

It is true that in the *Arthashastra* several chapters do deal with the Mauryan Law on the question of judicial torture, but we also note there that (a) Punishment is to be meted out only when the charge is quite established against the accused; and that (b) a

number of people such as ignoramuses and Brahmanas shall never be subject to physical pain ; women also were generally excluded ; Mr. Smith himself refers to the fact that in the *Arthasastra*, when the Superintendent of Jails subjects any persons to unjust punishment he is to be fined, and that causing death to anyone by torture was strictly prohibited. Further, the Edict says that "The administrators of the town should strive all the time that restraint or torment of citizens may not take place *without due cause*."

If due regard had to be paid to the law, how could there be excessive torture ? There was the punishment of mutilation no doubt, but there was also the alternative of fine. Only in one case have we found a reference to a man to be done to death *viz.*, when a man murdered another in a quarrel.

Mr. Smith characterises all the eighteen kinds of "torture," as he calls it, referred by Chanakya, as appalling. Of these however, 9 were blows with a cane,—a punishment which is even now resorted to. And if we compare the kinds of punishment in vogue even in eighteenth century England, we cannot accept the suggestion of the author of Asoka who characterises the Maurya Law as specially "horrible". And further when we consider in this connection, that there were a number of humane regulations even to prevent cruel treatment to animals, we can find even less justification for his further remark "that Asoka maintained the ferocious criminal code of his ancestors."

In the First Rock Edict there is a term *Samāja* which Dr. Thomas explains as "plainly a celebration of games or rather contests taking place in an arena, or amphitheatre, surrounded by platforms for spectators." And, if we enquire what there may have been in them to offend the humanity of Asoka, we have only to call to mind the contests of animals described by the Greeks and implied in the Sanskrit literature. The life of revelry indulged in by the warrior-caste, already indicated by the rules on drinking, dicing and contests between animals, and shown by the law, is perhaps caricatured by the great carousal in the *Harivamsa*, but is testified to not only by Megasthenes, but by the description in the Epic of all the paraphernalia of pastimes at Court. The *Samāja* we may add, also involved a public feast where meat, one of the principal articles of food, was served.

Dr. Thomas refers further to the *Dighanikaya* where we have mention of fights between elephants, buffaloes etc. and concludes, "we can easily, therefore, see why attendance at such gatherings is in the *Dighanikaya* stigmatized as a sin." Dr. Thomas, however, fails to notice one significant fact. The Edict says "Here no animal may be slaughtered for sacrifice, nor shall any merry-makings be held. His sacred and Gracious Majesty sees therein much offence, *although certain merrymakings are excellent in the sight of His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King.*" What was this other *Samāja* which a puritan king like Asoka thought excellent?

In Brahmanical literature we find references to three description of such *Samājas*, the first reference is in the *Hari-Vamśa* where Kamsa invited his people to witness a wrestling match; the second is in the *Mahābhārata*, where Dronācharya, the teacher of the Kuru-Pāndavas after finishing their education, wanted to give a public exhibition, and a *Samāja* was accordingly announced to the people. The third description is also in the *Mahābhārata* in connection with the *Svayamvara* of Draupadi where a *Samāja* was erected, abounding with actors, dancers etc.

In Buddhist literature also, there were two kinds of *Samāja*—one in which meat and other prohibitive foods were taken, while in the other there were only innocent amusements. E.g. in the *Vinaya* certain Bhikshus are described as behaving like ordinary sensual laymen in a *Samāja*, while we have also an account of a *Samāja*, where the assembled Bhikshus bathed and dined, there being no partaking of prohibitive food or drink.

Evidently the second kind of *Samāja* is referred to in the latter portion of the Edict as being appreciated by the King.

I shall now come to matters touching political history as indications of the political atmosphere of those days. Let us take the Third Rock Edict which I consider to be the most important Edict from the point of view of political matters, where there are a number of terms which call for special attention *viz.*—Yukta, Rajuka, Pradesika, Anusamyana, Parisat and Ganana.

Dr. Thomas was the first to recognise the meaning of Yukta as a subordinate official. Both Chanakya's Arthashastra and the Manava Dharma Sastra confirm his explanation of the term. The



next is Rajuka, who as we see in the Fourth Pillar Edict had power over many hundred thousands of people. Buhler's notion of its relation to *rajju*, a measuring rope, was evidently mistaken. Mr. Vincent Smith has translated the term into Governor. He says that, "Considering the extent of these officer's powers over hundreds of thousands of subjects, and the unfettered discretion allowed to them, the rendering "Governors" is preferable to "Commissioners". It is likely that the post of Rajuka had long existed and that Asoka's innovation consisted in granting them extensive powers obviating the necessity of their obtaining sanction for particular acts by references to the Crown.

The next term *Pradesika* has been explained by Dr. Thomas as "an officer attached to the several grades of councillors and of local Governors, and charged with the executive duties of revenue collection and police, a combination so constant in India." Mr. Vincent Smith (Asoka P. 162) accepts the explanation of Dr. Thomas and considers the officer "to have been more or less equivalent to the District officer or Magistrate and Collector of modern India."

I venture to differ from both these two high authorities. My first point is that the word *Pradesika* is derived from *Pradesa* which evidently implies a larger area,—a fact which Dr. Thomas himself admits. Secondly, if we refer to the *Arthasastra*, we find that the *Pradestris*—officers whom Dr. Thomas has identified with these *Pradesikas*—were to hold in check the Superintendents and their subordinates. They were, of course, under the Collector-General, as is evident from the above, but that they wielded considerable power is evident, for we find here that three *Pradestris* shall deal with measures to suppress disturbance to peace. Again we find these officers doing the duties of a judge. Thus it appears that their position was equal to that of a Minister, or at least that of a modern Commissioner and we are thus led to say that taking the derivation of the word as well as of the powers, they could not have been merely "district officers" charged with the executive duties of revenue collection and police.

The Girnar and the Kalinga Edicts contain the term *Anusamyana*. This is a difficult term and the difficulty has been intensified by the fact that up to time this word has not been

discovered in any place other than in the Edicts. At one time, the word was translated into "Assembly" and on another occasion as "Circuit." A new explanation has been suggested by Mr. K. P. Jayaswal, who questions: "Would the whole body of the High Ministers, who as at Taxila and at Ujjain were charged with the Government of the Presidency or Viceroyalty "go out" or "be turned out" together "for the purposes of going on an official tour"? And he goes on to observe that "the results would be that the Capital could be without a single minister during the alleged "tour". This interpretation is accepted by the late Dr. V. A. Smith who observes: "He is probably correct in referring to the *Sukraniti* and interpreting the term as signifying a regular system of transfer from one station or district to another, designed to prevent the abuses apt to arise when officials remain too long in a particular locality."

The term *Gananayam* is also important. It was the Accounts Department, referred to in the *Arthashastra*, which gives us full details about it. One of its duties was to prevent the diminishing of revenue,— "excellent is small expense with small accountation". As Kautilya says: "By how much the Superintendent of a department augments the net total of its revenue either by increasing any one of the items of its receipts or by decreasing any one of the items of expenditure, he shall be rewarded eight times that amount. But when it is reversed (*i.e.* when the net total is decreased) the award shall also be reversed (*i.e.* he shall be made to pay eight times the decrease)" the object in every case being economy.

Mr. Jayaswal adds in this connection that the *Ganana*, *i.e.*, the Department of State Accounts, was required to take notes of the order of the five-yearly transfers and implies that no allowance to the ministers after the fifth year was to be sanctioned by the Department, as that would be unlawful expenditure.

The term *Parisat* in this Edict (it also occurs in R. E. III) is one which requires further examination. Senart took it as *Samgha* and Buller as the "Committee of the Caste." The latest interpretation is *Mantriparisat*—an assembly of ministers. This term has been used in the *Arthashastra*. Kautilya observes "all kinds of administrative measures are preceded by deliberations

in a well formed Council". And again "in works of emergency, the King shall call both his ministers and the assembly of ministers." Mr. Jayaswal referring to these considers that the Council of Ministers was very powerful, so much so, that the Emperor was thereby deprived of "authority". But the question is, how far this Council of Ministers was effective and whether or not too much prominence has been given to the existence of the *Mantri-parisat*, with which has been compared the modern day Executive Councils?

Kautilya has observed regarding this important point, that the King is not to despise anybody's opinion but hear the opinion of all, "for a wise man shall make use of even a child's utterance," and though he advised the formation of a well-formed Council in which all kinds of administrative measures are to be preceded by deliberations, the authority which Chanakya exercised over Chandragupta, as we find in the *Mudraraksasa*, hardly leaves any doubt of the necessity for a Council.

The Arthasastra has laid special stress on spies and a spy system. Indeed the Institution of spies formed a special item in Chanaya's Code of Law. In the sixth Rock Edit (Girnar) occurs the word *Pativedaka* which has been rendered into *ushers* by Mr. K. P. Jayaswal. I am inclined to think, with Mr. V. A. Smith, that the term refers to spies many of whom had free access to the King.

A special injunction is laid down in the sixth Rock Edict that "A long period has elapsed during which in the past business was not carried on or information brought in at all times. So by me the arrangement has been made that at all times, when I am eating or in the ladies appartments, or in my private room or in the news, or in my conveyance, or in the pleasure grounds, every where *the persons appointed to give information should keep me informed about the affairs of the people.*" The persons appointed to give information (and from the derivation of the word *Pativedaka* we get the same meaning) could not be anybody other than these spies.

Ordinary ushers (whatever may be the duties of the gentleman ushers of the English court) could not have done all this in the time of the Mauryas when the King, as we find in the

Greek accounts, was so much afraid of his life that, he could not sleep twice in one room, and when the spy system being so much in vogue could be and was so easily availed of.

Further, the Edict goes on. "And in all places I attend the affairs of the people. And, if perchance, by word of mouth I personally command a donation or injunction, or again, when a matter of urgency has been committed to the High Officers, and in that matter a division or adjournment takes place in the council, then without delay information must be given to me in all places, at all times." It was only possible for the spies to carry such information to the king immediately, wherever he was.

Coming to the Fifth Rock Edict, we find the word *Mahāmātra* which is also referred to in R. E. XII and VII. Asoka observes, "Now in all the long time past, officers known as Censors (*Dharma-mahāmātras*) of the Law of Piety never had existed, whereas such Censors were created by me." This implies that before Asoka's time, there were officers whose duty was confined to the ordinary business of administration; but Asoka introduced an innovation by creating officers whose duty was to look to the Law of Piety and with a similar object, he created women censors, whose functions had special reference to ladies. We are told by Edict V, that these were employed in the Capital and in all provincial towns, in the women's apartments of the king's brothers and sisters, as well as other relatives.

There was a well-established department under these censors of the Law of Piety, who possessed the power of modifying the sentence of convicts while their other duties included jurisdiction in cases of injury inflicted on animals contrary to the regulations, exhibitions of gross filial disrespect and other breaches of the moral rules prescribed by authority. They were also instructed to redress cases of wrongful confinement or corporal punishment and were empowered to grant remission of sentence when the offender was entitled to consideration by reason of advanced years, sudden calamity or the burden of a large family. Very likely, they also shared with the censors of women the delicate duty of supervising feminine morals, the households of the royal family both at the capital and in the provincial towns being subject to their inspection.

From the Edicts, then, the hierarchy of officers in the establishment of Asoka may be roughly laid down as follows :

First come, of course, the Viceroys who stood at the head of all officers. They were members of the royal family, with headquarters at Taxila, Tosali, Ujjain. There was also a fourth Viceroy very likely at Suvannagiri who ruled the southern provinces beyond the Nerbudda.

The Mahámátras (ministers) come next with purely lay, functions but a new class of them was organised by Asoka who also supervised morals.

Next to them, come the Rajukas, who, as we have found, were set over many hundred thousands of people and were granted independence in the award of honours and penalties in order that they could confidently and fearlessly perform their duties, bestow welfare and happiness upon the people in the country and confer favours upon them. It seems to me that these were the officers who administered the central regions of the Empire.

The Yuktas who were the members of the subordinate civil service and the Upayuktas come next. These were all specially trained local officials (The Borderers' Edict). The Lekhyakas (clerks) come in last.

The Sixth Rock Edict is also important from the political standpoint. Here we find a close resemblance between what Asoka lays down, and what Chanakya the *guru* of the Mauryas lays down in his Arthasastra, so much so, that it seems clear that the great Buddhist Emperor followed the dictates of his great Brahman minister.

Asoka is not at all content with what his officers did. Information is to be sent to him even when he was eating or when he was in the ladies apartment or wherever he was. The Arthasastra clearly lays down the duties of the kind thus "when in court he shall never cause his petitioners to wait at the door, for when a king makes himself in accessible to his people and entrusts his work to his immediate officers, he is sure to engender confusion in business and to cause thereby public disaffection, and make himself a prey to his enemies. He shall, therefore, personally attend to the business of gods, of heretics, of Brahmans learned in the Vedas, of cattle, of sacred places, of minors, of the aged, the

afflicted, and the helpless, and of women. All this in order (of enumeration) or according to the urgency or pressure of those works. All urgent calls he shall hear at once, but never put off; for when postponed, they will prove too hard or impossible to accomplish.

Of a king, continues the Arthasastra, the religious vow is his readiness to action; satisfactory discharge of duties in his performance of sacrifice; equal attention to all in the offer of fees; and ablution toward consecration. In the happiness of his subjects lies his happiness; in their welfare his welfare; whatever pleases himself he shall not consider as good, but whatever pleases his subjects he shall consider as good. Hence the king shall ever be active and discharge his duties.

I shall now turn to discuss some terms bearing on the economic condition of India in the age of Mauryas.

The Superintendent of pastures is referred to in R. E. XIII. This officer was directly concerned with the sanctity of animal life and as such he figures along with the censors of the law of Piety and the censors of women. This of course as a natural conclusion. But, in addition to this, there seems to me some special reason for mentioning this officer and in this connection I would refer to Rock Edict VI, where Asoka wants to be informed of everything at all times. There we find the term *Vachambi* which has been translated into *news*. That is one of the places which appear to be frequently frequented by the Emperor himself. And why?

*Vachambi* is *Vraja* (Arthasastra 11.6) which was a herd of cattle including cows, buffaloes, goats, sheep, asses, camels, horses and mules. Great attention was paid in those days to agriculture and the importance of livestock being then fully realised, special care was taken by Government in regard to their health and improvement. Cattle were classified, branded and registered. There was a special department for pastures and grazing grounds for the proper supply of fodder and there were altogether elaborate arrangements for running the Department. It was therefore, no wonder that the king himself was bound to inspect the live stock, both from the religious as well as from the economic point of view.

The next question arises in connection with our study of the celebrated Rummindei inscription on the pillar placed to commemorate the birth place of Buddha. "Inasmuch as here the Holy one was born," the village of Lummini was released from religious cesses and required to pay only one-eighth as land revenue. *Bali* as explained by the Arthasastr is a special religious tax. The exemption from this was granted to the villagers, to mark the Emperor's visit to this sacred place. So much, of course, is clear.

There is, however, some difficulty about this one-eighth (*athabhāga*). *Bhaga*, according to the Arthasastra means a portion of produce payable to the Government, but what ordinarily was the King's share? The Arthasastra treats of revenue from various sources: Produce from crown lands (*sita*), portion of produce payable to the Government (*bhaga*) religious taxes (*bali*), taxes paid in money (*kara*) by merchants and farmers of rivers, ferries, boats and ships, towns and pasture grounds, roadcess (*vartain*) etc. No mention is made here as to the amount of tax payable, but in the same book we find the following: Fields that are left unsown, may be brought under cultivation by employing those who cultivate for half the share of the produce; or those who live by their own physical exertion may cultivate such fields for one-fourth or one-fifth of the produce grown. In another place, it is stated that "in such parts of his countries as depend solely upon rain for water and are rich in grain, the king may demand of his subjects one-third or one-fourth of their grain according to their capacity." And again: "They were to pay one-fourth of their grain."

Even this cursory analysis of the Edicts makes it clear that the prevalent notion as to the Edicts being merely of religious import, is an incorrect one, and that they do throw a flood of light not only on the ethical aspect, but also on the social, political and economical activities of the great Asoka, of whom it has been so aptly said: "If a man's fame can be measured by the number of hearts who revere his memory, by the number of lips who have mentioned and still mention him with honour, Asoka is more famous than Charlemagne or Caesar" (*Koppen*).

## CHINA'S DEBT TO INDIA.

By PROF. LIANG CHI CHAO.

[*From a speech of welcome to Rabiindranath Tagore*].

The meaningless idolatry of hero-worship is common amongst the peoples of Europe and America. We, Chinese, have not so far acquired this fashionable habit. We, who welcome Dr. Tagore may each have our several reasons,—it may even be that, like the Europeans and Americans, some of us are merely hero-worshipping him. But we must all recognise the one great idea, that he comes to us from the country which is our nearest and dearest brother,—India.

To say that the country of India is our brother is not a mere matter of courtesy to our guest. The fact has its foundation in history.

In ancient times China did not enjoy that facility of communication which was the privilege of the races bordering the Mediterranean Sea. On the other hand, we had the disadvantage of being shut up in one corner of eastern Asia without any means of communicating with other great races and cultures. The islands in the eastern and southern oceans were populated by savages. America, on the far side of the Pacific, gave no sign of civilisation. Beyond our western and northern frontiers there were those barbarous and ferocious races, whose business it ever was to threaten and devastate, but never to help us.

It is well for us to remember that this little privilege of culture, which we possess to-day, has been handed down to us by our ancestors, who laboured long within secluded boundaries, unaided and single-handed. It is also due to the seclusion of its environment that our culture gives the impression of being monotonous and conservative to an extraordinary degree.

But across our south-western boundary, there was a great and cultured country, India. Both in character and geography, India and China are like twin brothers. Before most of the civilised races became active, we two brothers had already begun



to study the great problems which concern the whole of mankind. We had already accomplished much in the interests of humanity. India was ahead of us and we, the little brother, followed behind.

But God had not been kind. He had placed between us a vast area of unfeeling desert and two great ranges of cruel snowy peaks, which separated us for thousands of years. It was not till two thousand years ago that we were given gradually to know that we had a very good elder brother on the earth.

When did these two great countries begin to communicate with each other?

According to India history, King Asoka sent a number of missionaries to propagate Buddhist ideas. Probably some of them had travelled as far as China. Our own tradition says that in the time of the famous Emperor Chin Sze Hwang, (who built the Great Wall), there were already more than ten Hindus, who had been to Chang-on and who were imprisoned and killed by him (from the book *Shih I Gee*). Asoka and Chin Sze Hwang were contemporaries and therefore this might have been true. But we need not worry over half fairy tales.

What we as historians are able to vouch is, that the first communication between us as brothers occurred in the first century of the era of Christ. From the tenth year of Han Yung Tsin to the fifth year of Tang Chen Yuan (67—789 A.D.), roughly eight-hundred years, the Hindu scholars, who came to China numbered twenty-four, to which may be added thirteen from Kashmir (which in Tang times was not recognised as part of India) thus making thirty-seven in all, not counting those who came from other countries on the eastern and western side of Chung Lin (Turkestan). Our scholars, who went to India to study, during the period from the western Tsin to the Tang dynasties (265—790 A.D.) numbered 187, the names of 105 of whom we can ascertain. Among the most famous from India were Tumullosa (*Kumárajīva*) Chu Shien (*Buddhabhadra*) Chen Di (*Jinabhadra*) and from China, Ta Shien, Yuan Chuang and I Tsin.

During a period of 700 to 800 years, we lived like affectionate brothers, loving and respecting one another.

And now we are told that, within recent years, we have at length come into contact with civilised (!) races. Why have they come to us? They have come coveting our land and our wealth; they have offered us as presents cannon balls dyed in fresh blood; their factories manufacture goods and machines which daily deprive our people of their crafts. But we two brothers were not like that in the days gone by. We were both devoted to the cause of the universal truth, we set out to fulfil the destiny of mankind, we felt the necessity for co-operation. We Chinese specially felt the need for leadership and direction from our elder brothers the people of India. Neither of us were stained in the least by any motive of self-interest—of that we had none.

During the period when we were most close and affectionate to one another, it is a pity that this little brother had no special gift to offer to its elder brother; whilst our elder brother had given to us gifts of singular and precious worth, which we can never forget.

Now what is it that we so received?

1. India taught us to embrace the idea of absolute freedom,—that fundamental freedom of mind, which enables it to shake off all the fetters of past tradition and habit as well as the present customs of a particular age,—that spiritual freedom which casts off the enslaving forces of material existence. In short, it was not merely that negative aspect of freedom which consists in ridding ourselves of outward oppression and slavery, but that emancipation of the individual from his own self, through which men attain great liberation, great ease and great fearlessness.

2. India also taught us the idea of absolute love, that pure love towards all living beings which eliminates all obsessions of jealousy, anger, impatience, disgust and emulation which expresses itself in deep pity and sympathy for the foolish, the wicked and the sinful,—that absolute love, which recognises the inseparability between all beings. “The equality of friend and enemy.” “The oneness of myself and all things.” This great gift is contained in the Da Tsang Jen (Buddhist classics). The teachings in these seven thousand volumes can be summed up in one phrase: *To cultivate sympathy and intellect, in order to*

*attain absolute freedom through wisdom and absolute love through pity.*

3. But our elder brother had still something more to give. He brought us invaluable assistance in the field of literature and art. In the first place, these came indirectly through Si-Yu; and secondly from the Indian sages, who came to China bringing with them, as gifts for presentation to our Emperor, their pictures, sculptures, and books. Thirdly they were brought by the Chinese scholars on their return from India; for instance, in the biography of Uuen Tsang, besides his observations on the classics, there was a list of articles in which were included all kinds of works of art. Lastly we learn from the translated classics, not only of India's wisdom, but also of its art.

4. Of minor gifts, I will enumerate only the following :

*Music.*—This came indirectly through Si-Yu. We have no idea what our ancient music was like, for after the Southern and Northern Dynasties, it had degenerated and almost disappeared. It is possible that something was left in the South of the Yang Tse river, but in the North our own music gave way before the Indian influences, which were brought in by Si-Yu. The Sui and Tang dynasties succeeded the Northern dynasties and united the empire and thereafter this northern music predominated. The most popular tunes were Gan Chou, I Chou and Liang Chou, all names of districts in the Sin Chang and Gan Su provinces. But at that time these provinces were almost wholly under the influence of India. To-day we have no record of the music of this era, except what has been preserved by the Japanese Royal House. But from what is recorded in the history of Tang and the Book of Music as well as in the appreciations of music found in our general literature, we can be certain that that music must have been beautiful and exquisite. The cause of such excellence is probably due to the marriage of Chinese and Indian modes.

*Architecture.*—That China has been influenced by Indian in her architecture is an obvious fact although we have lost sight of the great work in the *Cha Lan* Temple in Lo Yang, and although we have to rely upon accounts met with in literature and poetry to obtain any idea of the beauty and grandeur of the temples of

*Yung Pin* (Perpetual Peace) and *Tsze* (Material Grace), we have still standing a number of ruins which tell us of the glory of those olden days. The pagoda is purely Indian in origin, we never had it before the days of Indian influence. We do not always realise how much this particular form of architecture adds to the natural beauty of our landscape. We cannot imagine the West Lake in Hang Chow without its two pagodas, the grand *Luey Fong* (Thunder peak) and the graceful *Ban Su*. What charm would be in the City of Pian Lianz, if it were not for the presence of the iron pagoda and the pagoda *Tan Tai* (House of abundance)? The oldest piece of architecture in Peking is the pagoda in front of the temple *Tien Nien* (Heavenly Peace) built at the end of the 6th century A.D. What beauty of harmony does the island of *Chung Hwa* (Fairy flower), in Pei Hei, reveal with the white pagoda on its peak and the long verandah below, which the combination of Chinese and Indian architecture alone could have achieved. There as elsewhere we see the wonderful interplay of these two cultures.

*Painting.*—The paintings of the most ancient period of our history have disappeared. Only from the stone tablets and stone inscriptions, such as the famous Han paintings in Wu Liang Tse and Jab Siang Shien, do we obtain a glimpse of the fine simplicity of style in the paintings of that period. The most renowned painters in our early history were Kuo Tan Wei and Kuo Hu To. They were famous for their paintings of Buddha. Another interesting relic is still to be found in Lo San, the famous shadow of Buddha, which I suspect to be the first piece of oil painting in China. A few of works of Wang Wei and Wu Tao Tse are still preserved and for the most part they are Buddhistic pictures. It seems obvious that, from the East Chin dynasty to that of Tang, there was continuous communication between India and China and this, with its introduction of numerous Indian pictures, had a shaping influence upon Chinese art; in fact we might go further and say that we probably owe the very foundation of our Chinese painting to India influence. This great school continued to flourish till the North Sung dynasty, when it was superseded by the artists of our Royal Academy. It is still regarded as embody-

ing the classical style of Chinese painting, so you see what a beautiful child this marriage between India and China has brought forth.

*Sculpture.*—In olden times we had engravings upon stone but never, I think, sculpture in three dimensions before the introduction of Buddhism. From the Book of famous Monks, we learn that Tai An Tao (Tsin dynasty), who was generally known as a painter and a literary man, was also a sculptor. He and his brother worked together upon a large image of Buddha, which enjoyed great fame in its day. After that time there are records of famous sculptures executed during the six dynasties and the Sui and Tang. Unfortunately all these were destroyed during the Civil Wars as well as by the deliberate vandalism of three emperors, who were bitterly opposed to Buddhism. We still possess to-day the great rock sculptures and reliefs, three or four thousand in number, at Lo Yang and Lung Men, executed during the Wei and Tsi dynasties. But the greatest treasure we have is the group of figures at Yung Kwang, Da Tung and Shensi, large and small, not less than a thousand in number. It is said that the style is after Gandhara in Afghanistan, the result of the meeting between the Greek and the Indian Culture. This is indeed a priceless possession of which if it had not for our elder brother we should have been deprived. Incidentally, we might also mention the art of the *kakimono*, whose origin we also owe to India. In fact in the inventory of Yuen Tsang, there is a record of a number of *kakimono*, which he brought back with him from India.

*Drama.*—We can trace the art of drama back to the play of Fish and Dragon, which was probably a species of magic or legerdemain, rather than drama in the modern sense. Dancing and Singing had their respective origins in ancient days, but the combination of the two does not seem to appear till after the Tsing Dynasty. The earliest operatic play we know of was called Pu Tow. Modern research has shown that it was introduced from a country called Bato, near Southern India, some ten thousand miles from Da Tung. The story of the play centres round a man who went into the mountains to avenge his father, who was

killed by a tiger. He expresses his feelings in passionate song and dance. Later plays such as Lian Ling Wang, the King of Lan Lin and the Tao Yao Niang were all patterned on Pu Tow. If this is true, then once again we are in debt to India in the field of drama.

*Poetry and Fiction.*—To say that India influenced us even in poetry and fiction would perhaps seem astonishing. I myself am not certain whether in these modes of expression, we ever received any distant influence from India, but on the other hand we have reason to believe that the celebrated translation of the two great books, Fu Pan Shen Tsai (the life of Sâkyamuni by Asvaghôsha) and Dai Shen Chung Yen Tsin (Mahâyâna Sûtra) by the great Indian poet Ma Ming (Indian name unknown) must have exerted a decided influence upon our literature. Our original poetry from the Book of Odes to the five syllable lines of Han and Wei included only short personal lyrics. Narrative poetry never made its appearance until the six dynasties in such poems as Kung Chou Tung Nan Fe and Fu Pan Shen Tsai, (originally a long biographical poem, but now rendered into Chinese prose in four books), which latter not only exerted great influence as Hindu literature, but was also greatly influential among literary circles in China during the six dynasties. Its vast imagination and rich emotional appeal opened new vistas for the Chinese poets and I suspect that the Kung Chou Tung Nan Fe and the long narrative poems of the same order were themselves inspired by this great work. There is clear evidence that our Novel writing was under the direct influence of Mahayana translations. It seems to me that our tales from the Tein to the Tang period, were modelled on them. Our novels, properly speaking, did not appear till the Sung period and were largely the product of our study of Hua Yuan and Pan Chi (Ratna Uta).

*Astronomy and Calendar.*—This special branch of science was early cultivated in China, but received further development in the Tang period, when the publication of Ju Tchu Sie showed distinct influence from India.

*Medicine.*—This is an original art in China but it received great encouragement from our contact with India. What is

recorded in the History of Suey and in the Books on Art and Literature in the History of Tang gives sufficient proofs of my assertion.

*Alphabet.*—The Chinese language is by nature pictorial, and that is a great disadvantage. With the introduction of Buddhism and Sanskrit a number of Indian scholars attempted to invent an alphabetical system to solve our difficulties. Although it was rather crude and did not yield very satisfactory results, it furnished us with valuable material for further experimentation.

*Literary style.*—Ancient Chinese written books do not show sufficient effort at organisation and therefore lack clarity of presentation. With the coming in of Buddhist classics, it began to be more systematic and consequently more lucid and logical in the exposition of ideas. Indian logic (Hetuvidya) and methodology opened a new era in China in the art of writing. Yuan Chuang was one of the most painstaking students of this new science and he and his new followers created a new school of thought famous for its rigorous analytical and critical method, which stood in direct opposition to the contemplative and introspective method of the Zen Buddhists.

*Educational method.*—Exactly how education was conducted in ancient China no one is able to tell, but we are quite certain that Confucius and Mencius did not resort to the method of addressing large audiences for the propagation of their teachings, and it is quite likely, therefore, that the system of formal lecturing, with which we are so familiar to-day, came from India. Furthermore the academics which flourished since the Tang dynasty cannot be other than Buddhist in origin. Whether this setting part of particular institutions for the investigation of specialised problems has great educational value is another question, but we must acknowledge the important position which this method occupies in Chinese educational history.

*Social Organisation.*—The unit of Chinese society is the family. The different forms of social organisation are only the family in its various modifications. Since Buddhism became popular in China, public bodies with religious and scholarly purposes, independent of the family, began to appear. And

these flourished in such extraordinary degree that the power of Government could have no control over them. The Pu Do islands, up to the present day, enjoy exclusive judicial privileges and are administered on a peculiar social basis of a more or less communistic nature.

What I have referred to above comprise the main elements of our Buddhistic heritage and I am proud to say that we have made use of it to good purpose.

Indian thought has been entirely assimilated into our own world of experience and has become an inalienable part of our consciousness. It has helped us to develop our faculties and has enabled us to achieve notable results in the various fields of literary and artistic endeavour. Even if we confine our case to Buddhism itself, we find that we have made some worthy contributions to its many metaphysical systems, forming ever new schools of thought upon the foundation of the old, through the energy and application of men like Yuan Chiang; so that we may take just pride in saying that Buddhism has become as distinctly Chinese as it is Indian.

We have unfortunately been separated from one another now for at least one thousand years and have each pursued our respective lines of development. We have had calamities during these years of separation. What have we not experienced? We have been threatened mocked, trampled upon and have suffered all possible mortifications, so much so indeed that not only have we been looked upon with contemptuous eyes, but we ourselves have begun to lose the sense of self-respect.

But we have faith in the imperishability of human endeavour and the seeds we have sown, in spite of the many vicissitudes and inclemencies which we are passing through, will eventually bring us harvest in the fulness of time.

Do not we find an inspiring symbol in the ancient trees of the sacred wood round Confucius' tomb, reputed to have been planted by himself and his chief disciples, which though shrunk with senility and almost in a petrified state, are yet capable of manifesting their hidden vitality by shooting forth new branches of tender green, when the earth is awakened to the call of Spring?



Both the civilisations represented by India and China are hoary with ancient traditions and yet I feel that there is in them the vigour of eternal youth, which shows itself to-day in India in the two great personalities of Tagore and Gandhi.

After a thousand years of separation during which period, however, we two continued to cherish thoughts of love for one another, this elder brother of ours has once more come to us animated with fraternal sentiments. Both of us bear lines of sorrow on our face, our hair is grey with age, we stare with a blank and vacant look as if we are just awakened from a dream; but, as we gaze on each other, what recollections and fond memories of our early youth rise in our mind,—of those days, when we shared our joys and sorrows together! Now that we have once more the happiness of embracing, we shall not allow ourselves to separate again.

We would welcome Mr. Tagore in the same spirit as, more than one thousand years ago, the people of Lo-Yang welcomed Shimonden, or as the people of Lusan welcomed Chang Ti.

Mr. Tagore wishes to make it known that he is not a religious teacher or an educationist or a philosopher, he says that he is only a poet. This we fully acknowledge.

And he says also that he cannot place himself on the same level as his predecessors, who came in our early dynasties, because India at that time was in a period of great epic pre-eminence; it was an epoch which was capable of giving birth to great ideals and noble personalities, and therefore totally different in its spirit to the present era of transition, where human thoughts and ideas are in a state of turmoil and confusion and therefore offer no encouragement to the development of genuine and worthy personalities. This sentiment we can also, I think, appreciate.

And yet, to be a great poet needs more than an exquisite sense of what is artistic,—one must also be inspired by serious and magnanimous thoughts. In the personality of Mr. Tagore, as well as in his poetry, we find that exemplification of those principles of absolute love and absolute freedom, which form the basis of Hindu culture and civilisation.

I have no adequate idea of Hindu poetry in the great classical period and cannot, therefore, compare that with the work of our

distinguished guest. But I am perfectly sure that Mr. Tagore is as important to us as Asvaghôsha who wrote the life of Buddha in ancient days, and we hope the influence he is going to exert in China will not in any way be inferior to that of Kumârajîva and Chang-ti.

Mr. Tagore says also that he has nothing to offer as a gift from India, but he wishes to express the sentiments of love of the people of India from which he has come as a representative. I wish to say in reply that the sentiments of love are more worthy than all the gifts that he can possibly offer us. We are more than overjoyed to receive them and we wish that he would take back with him our love and sympathy, which are, I can assure him, even more intense than his own.

We trust that, on this occasion, the love between China and India will not terminate with the one or two months which Dr. Tagore is able to spend in this country. The responsibility that we bear to the whole of mankind is great indeed, and there should be, I think, a warm spirit of co-operation between India and China. The coming of India's Poet will, I hope, mark the beginning of an important epoch.

If we can avail of this occasion to renew the intimate relationship which we had with India and to establish a really constructive scheme of co-operation, then our welcome to Dr. Tagore will have real significance.

**THE MAGNIFICENCE OF DEATH.**

*By* RABINDRANATH.

As the tender twilight covers in its fold of dusk-veil  
Marks of hurt and wastage from the dusty day's prostration,  
Even so let my great sorrow for thy loss, Beloved,  
Spread one perfect golden-tinted silence of its sadness  
O'er my life. Let all its jagged fractures and distortions,  
All unmeaning scattered scraps and wrecks and random ruins,  
Merge in vastness of some evening stilled with thy remembrance,  
Filled with endless harmony of pain and peace united.

Love, thou hast made great my life with death's magnificence,  
And hast tinted all my thoughts and dreams with radiant hues  
Of thy farewell rays. The tear-washed limpid light reveals  
At life's last sunset-point, the hints of Paradise  
Where descending flame of Kiss from starry sphere of love  
Lights the sorrows of our earth to splendour of their end.  
In one blazing ecstasy of uttermost extinction.  
Love, thou hast made one vast wonder Life and Death for me.

## SOME FACTORS IN THE MAKING OF BENGAL.

By PANCHCOWRIE BANERJEE.

We present, in translation, a second instalment from the notes on the Special Features of the Bengali Race left in our hands by the author, shortly before his death.—Ed.

From the earliest ages, Bengal had a distinct civilisation of its own, different from and a rival to that of the Aryan invaders of India. And, neither the Vedic religion, nor the social ritual based on it, ever took deep root in our province, in spite of the fact that, age after age, fresh Aryan blood from western India, continued to be imported.

I do not hesitate to admit that Bengal owed much in the way of learning and outlook to the Aryans, but, in assimilating Aryan lore and culture, the Bengali made it soft and cool and rich, with all the luscious sweetness that characterises the products of his alluvial Motherland.

That is why the beef-eating, *sôma*-bibbing Aryan of old apparently waxed wroth and laid down the injunction that whosoever should sojourn in that seductively bewitching region of Bengal, for purposes other than temporary pilgrimage, would be required to undergo purification on his return ! .

It is a pity that we Bengalis, the inheritors of this age-old distinction, know so little of, care so little about, feel so little pride in the glorious past of our race and our land, the first home of *Ahimsa* ; for, as I hope to show another time, Buddhism found its most congenial field for development, and Jainism its origin, in Bengal.

### *The Bengali Language.*

The first thing that strikes one with wonder is, how this vast tract now known as Bengal, differentiated by climatic conditions, cut up by immense rivers, should at all have come under one and the same language and tradition, as we find it to-day.

Regard for historical truth, as glimpses of it have come to

me, compels me to ascribe this, not to Vedic or Aryan influence, but to the unique proselytising proclivities of the Shakas (the race which gave birth to Shákya Sinha, the Buddha) and to the democratic spirit of other later incoming races, possibly offshoots of Chaldeans or Huns, to which many of the subsequent Buddhist missionaries belonged.

It was due to these racial characteristics that the leading spirits of the Sahajia and Tantric sects (Bengal forms of Buddhism) set out with a comprehensive programme of spreading their culture amongst the masses. By dint of their own pursuit of the simple life, on the one hand, and the employment as instruments by them of song and story couched in the vernacular, on the other, these Siddhácháryas (Teachers who had won self-realisation) carried far and wide what they called the "True Religion" which was nothing but "natural" or "free" religion based on Buddhist teaching, expressed by the different exponents in slightly varied forms, and above all actually lived.

The number of these Siddhácháryas was legion; but we find such names as Lui, Kánha, Sabar, Nágárjun, Dák, Nádha standing out more prominently in our old literature. Srijñán Dipankar, who became famed in Tibet as Atisa, and Ratnákar Sánti, both of them pillars of the Vikramsílá University, and renowned for their learning throughout the then civilised world, were reckoned amongst the Siddhácháryas in Bengal, and so were many of the Jain holy men.

Dák and his followers were not singers, but reciters of legends and stories. A section of the modern Puranic reciters are of this school and their recitations are even now called the *Kathá* (stories) of Dak. Nádha has left his name to the Neda-nedi sect of wandering Vaishnavas, still to be seen to-day. We have the Bengali proverb: "No song but Kanu's". Kánu is a pet name for Srikrishna as well, and the proverb is sometimes misinterpreted to mean that no song is worth singing unless it treats of Krishna. It really, however, refers to the compositions of Kánha (Kánhu, Kánu, Kán), the Siddhacharya, who was the originator of the Bengal form of *Kirtan*, or sacred mass-singing.

This Kánha originally belonged to the class of Sraman pandits, or Buddhist preachers; but, as the cultural unification

of Bengal proceeded, his followers came to be included under the head of Brahmins, being known up to only the other day, as Kinnara- or Kán-Brahmins, meaning Brahmin bards. To this caste belonged Jayadeva, whose *Gîta-Gôvinda* has become an all-India classic; and he, with his wife, with the *bonhomie* characteristic of true Bengal poets, used to go about singing and dancing to his own melodious verses,—a performance shocking to the austere susceptibilities of the pure-bred Western Brahmin.

In fact, when later on, an Aryan polish came to be superimposed upon the people, the descendants of this and other similar castes dropped their epithets of *kinnara* or *kán*, *gandharva* or *gāndh*, with their derogatory associations of public singing and dancing by both sexes, and took shelter in one or other of the upper castes—Brahmin, Vaidya or Kayastha—of Orthodoxy, in the fold of which they remain hidden away to-day.

When in the succeeding age, Chaitanya and Nityánanda arose, they found ready to hand these trained reciters and singers of the Siddhácháryas, and with their help was laid the foundation of the *Vaishnavism* which up to the present day holds its sway over the heart of Bengal. And further, from Chaitanya down to Rabindranath, an unfailing succession of poets have built up the crowning edifice of Bengal's genius—the Religion of Love—upon the broad base of Buddha's original ideal of *Ahimsa*.

The language which these Siddhácháryas used for their religious ballads, lyrics and other compositions, was called the *Sandhyá* language. The word *sandhyá* means *borderland*, and hence is also used to mean *twilight*.

Pandit Haraprasad Shastri came to the conclusion that the language used by the Siddhácháryas was called *sandhyá*, because it was a kind of twilight language, which sought to give mere glimpses of the high truths of Buddhism, not in their pure original form, but in such modified shape as could be understood by the common people, leaving deliberately vague what it was not deemed safe or useful for them to worry about. With this conclusion I cannot agree.

The tract to the S. E. of Bhagalpur, comprising the western portions of Birbhum and the Sonthal Perganas, is the borderland between the old Aryáavarta (the Indian domicile of the Aryans)

and Bengal proper, and was called the Sandhyá country. Any one who is familiar with the several dialects, all closely resembling one another, spoken in that region, cannot have any doubts as to their near relationship to the language used by the Siddhácháryas.

Pandit Haraprasad Shastri would perhaps have been surprised to learn that many of the poems and songs collected by him are still extant in this Sandhyá country. The Sandhyá dialect has its own minor variations and its eastern form was the immediate precursor of Bengali proper.

*Why Bengal failed of Aryanisation.*

As I have said, Buddhism was *par excellence* the proselytising religion, and its Bengal missionaries, the Siddhácháryas, developed in a wonderful degree the art of translation-cum-exposition, through the vernacular, of the high truths which the orthodox Aryans preferred to veil in the language of their gods, —Sanskrit. This resulted in the spread of mass culture in a way and to a degree undreamt of by any modern civilisation.

One can easily understand how stimulated must have been the growth of a language, so used as a vehicle for the dissemination of the best culture of the times, by such towering pandits as Srîjñán Dipankar and Ratnákara Sánti, of Vikramśilá University. And I am entirely at one with Pandit Haraprasad Shastri when he says that, even before the Mohamedan conquest, the Bengali language had already attained remarkable development, and that both Bengali literature and culture, the individuality as well as the distinction of the Bengali race, were established upon a Buddhistic foundation.

The Sahajia system of natural religion, a product of the reaction of Buddhism on the mind of Bengal, was subdivided into three sects, each pursuing a path of its own to the self-realisation of Man, called respectively the *Avadhûti*, the *Chandáli*, and the *Dômbi* or *Bangáli*. Those who belonged to the last named were called *Bangális* which was thus originally the name of the followers of a particular cult of Buddhism and not of the inhabitant of a particular region. This was the cult mainly propagated by the Siddhácháryas and thus eventually gave its name to the people of the tracts which fell under their influence.

It is difficult, to-day, to estimate the vastness of that influence of the Siddhácháryas over the masses now known as Bengalis, but some idea of it may be gained by visiting any village fair, or religious festivity of the people, in any part of our province, and paying careful heed to the songs which are sung by the wandering *baúls* (*lit.* madcaps) who invariably congregate on such occasions. The philosophy of the worship of Man Wonderful will then be heard, rendered in its original dialect.

It was probably with the idea of combating this all-pervading Buddhist influence on the masses, that the dominant Aryan upper-classes used, from time to time, to make importations of pure Aryan blood from western India. And, when most of the big *zamindarics* had been farmed out to these imported Brahmins, an artificial Aryan polish eventually came to be imposed on the Hindus of Bengal.

These pedigreed Brahmins from Aryávarta were, however, exclusive, stand-offish, supercilious. They kept their learning and their sacred rituals to themselves, fortified against alien inroads within the fastness of archaic Sanskrit; they entered into no intimacy of social relations with the people amongst whom they came to dwell, confining their religious ministrations to the King and upper-classes. That is why, on the one hand, these attempts at the Aryanisation of Bengal never went deep, but remained at most as a superficial veneer; and, on the other, the leadership of the masses remained in the hands of the Siddhácháryas, who had realised religion in their own lives and were also imbued with the democratic as well as proselytising spirit of their original race.

So recently as eighty, or even fifty, years ago, when the Buddhist influence had thus been driven underground, there were still to be found in many villages stray devotees, usually designated with some epithet signifying "mad", who, with their groups of disciples of all castes, kept up the Buddhist cults as they had taken shape in Bengal, under shelter of this self-adopted "madness." Bishu Págla of Santipur, Báma Khepá of Tarapur, Balá Hádi of Meherpur, are well-known examples. And, every now and then, up to perhaps the present time, the Buddhist culture, which is very much alive, though popularly supposed to



have been driven out of Hindu territory, pushes through the Aryan veneer on top, and crops up in unexpected, often unrecognised forms.

*Bengal's reaction to Islam.*

With the establishment of the Mahomedan invaders of India as children of its soil, further and larger syntheses, comprising both Hindu and Moslem ideals, were attempted all over India, as is evidenced by the cults founded by Nanak, Kabir, Dadu and others. The great Emperor Akbar himself promulgated a common religion, the Din-i-Ilahi, which, in my younger days, I have personally seen in living form amongst the Lalas and Khetris in the country to the west of Bengal.

But the manner in which such synthesis was shaping in Bengal itself, had a liberal and intimate character of its own. The *baïls*, who later on took up the propagation of the Sahajia cult, were originally the spiritual descendents of the Jaláli faqirs, so called after Jaláluddin, the first name of Akbar the Great. Many a Mahomedan faqir, of other denominations also, came to be accepted as *gurus* by Hindu sects. Even now pious Brahmins, while bathing, sing the praises of the Ganges in the words of Daráb Gázi, a Mahomedan poet. The hymns to *Shyáma* (the Dark goddess), by Janabáli Khan of East Bengal, were once as popular as those of Rámprasád himself. There is to-day a sect of Sufi Tantriks in Midnapur which counts its adherents by the thousand. Satyapir, the Mahomedan Saint, is still worshipped by the most orthodox of Hindu women, all over Bengal.

And I fully believe that if this process had not been disturbed and checked by the advent of the creed-bound Britisher, with his cast-iron habits of mind and methods of government, which for the first time crystallised Bengal Hinduism into a rigid orthodoxy, Hindu-Moslem unity, by now, would have been an accomplished fact in this Province.

What is more, from my reading of the Sûnya Purána, I strongly suspect that it was not a case of the invasion of Bengal by the Pathan at all, but that the Pathans were invited, or at all

events welcomed, into Bengal by the Buddhist masses, followers of the Siddhácháryas, who were then at the height of their influence, which ranged from Panchkot in the North-West, right down to Chittagong and Arracan in the South-East.

One of the results of this friendly intimacy of our people with the Pathans, was the wholesale conversion to Islam of a large part of East Bengal, and a further infusion of new blood into the Bengali race, by an intermingling of the two.

We find further evidences of this friendship between the Pathan and the original Bengali during the wars of Moghul and Pathan, when the flower of Bengal's manhood sacrificed themselves on the battle-field on the side of the Pathans, winning unstinted praise from their antagonists, the Moghal generals, for their bravery.

This transition from Pathan to Moghal domination was a great period,—which may be likened to the Augustan period,—in the history of Bengal. For, though on the one hand anarchy and license were doubtless rampant, on the other, rose Lord Chaitanya, Nityánanda, Krishnánanda Agamvágish, Raghunandan, Devívara, who, as we have seen, brought about between them a coherent expansion of Hindu Bengal into one cultural unit, on a scale the vastness of which is beyond modern comprehension.

### *Now or Never!*

As I have said, devotees of these various Buddhist cults are still to be found among the so-called lower classes, for the seeking; much of the ceremonial in vogue amongst the women of Bengal in their special religious observances, such as *vratas*, and in the women's part of the Hindu Marriage ceremony and other social rituals, retain unmistakeable traces of their other than Aryan origin; the village reciters and singers of the compositions of the original religious preachers have not as yet entirely died out.

Now is the time, or never, when those of us who would lay the foundation for a real and abiding patriotism, a true pride in the special distinctions of our wonderful Motherland, should bestir themselves to inaugurate a scientific study of the existing materials, already fast vanishing, before it is too late.

## BEFORE THE DAWN.

Bereft of the spirit of initiative, tired of impotent revolts, and deprived of legitimate ambitions, the Chinese and the Indian of to-day have come to prostrate themselves before the inevitable. Some among them find refuge in the memory of past grandeur, thus hardening the crust of tradition and exclusiveness; while the souls of others, wafted among ethereal dreams, seek solace in an appeal to the unknown.

The Night of Asia which enshrouds them is not perhaps without its own subtle beauty. It reminds us of the deep, glorious nights we know so well in the East,—listless like wonder, serene like sadness, opalescent like love. One may listen to the secret cadence of nature beyond the border where sound bows to silence.

Japan, who proved herself equal to the task of repelling the Mongol invasion, found little difficulty in resisting that attempt at Western encroachment which, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, came in the form of the Shimabara rebellion, instigated by the Jesuits. It has been our boast that no foreign conqueror ever polluted the soil of Japan, but these attempts at aggression from the outside hardened our insular prejudice into a desire for complete isolation from the rest of the world. For the space of nearly two and seventy years we were as one buried alive!

Yet worse, the Tokugawa Shoguns, who brought about this remarkable isolation of Japan, threw their invisible tyranny over all the nation. Said Kampici, the Chinese Machiavelli, in telling the secret of absolutism twenty-two centuries ago: "Amuse them, tire them not, let them not know." Iyeyasu, the first Tokugawa Shogun, a past master of craft, followed these injunctions but too faithfully. We were amused, we cared not for change, we did not seek to know.

From the highest to the lowest, all were entangled in a subtle web of mutual espionage, and every element of individuality was crushed under the unbending weight of formalism. Deprived of all stimulus from without, and imprisoned within, our island realm groped amid a maze of tradition. Darkest over us lay the Night of Asia.

—Okakura.

## HOW THE INDIAN PAGODA WENT EAST.

By KSHITISH-PRASAD CHATTOPADHYAY.

The manner in which Indian influence of old travelled into China and through China further East, present fascinating questions to those who are looking forward to a re-union of the cultures of all the East. And a study of the bordering regions such as Nepal and Tibet may well be expected to throw considerable light on the process of such interchange as undoubtedly took place along inland routes.

In the present sketch I offer a few notes from my study of the Newars of Nepal, which may serve to indicate some of the intricacies which have to be unravelled in the process of deciding which is the origin and which the recipient of the influence.

Take the case of the Pagoda type of architecture, to which I propose to confine myself on this occasion. Following perhaps the loose ideas prevalent in modern Anglo-India, due to the suggestion of Hamilton and others, it has come to be popularly supposed that the pagoda, which is such a distinctive feature of Far-Eastern landscape, is typical of architecture of Mongolian origin and therefore occurs in the frontier regions of India as an importation from the other side of the border. But, on a detailed consideration of the facts relating to the Newar race, the reverse is found to be the case.

The valley of Nepal proper is mainly inhabited by the Newars who form the most numerous group of the inhabitants of the Kingdom of Nepal. The Gurkhas, who are the dominant ruling people at the present time, entered Nepal in a body, only in recent times. The Newars are the earlier people, and to them are almost wholly confined metal working, agriculture, painting architecture, sculpture and the literature that Nepal possesses. The Gurkhas are merely the military conquerors, indifferent patrons of arts and letters, and include only a few artisan castes, or rather outcastes, among them.

The Newars are divided into—

- (i) Bauddhamargis who worship Buddha, and
- (ii) Sivamargis who worship Siva.

The latter may be termed Hindus. Formerly the vast majority of Newars were Buddhists, and a minority Sivamargis, but the former have been losing ground steadily for a long time in favour of the latter, who are now between a half and a third of the population.

The Sivamargis have an organisation similar to that of the Hindus of the plains, although of a much simpler character.

The highest caste is that of the Brahmans who are the spiritual guides of the upper castes. They are said to be descendants of Brahmans who had originally come from Kanauj.

Next in rank are the descendants of the former Hindu Newar Kings and their agnates who rank as Kshatriyas. The former warrior caste of Sresthas is also held to fall within this group, though it occupies a much lower position.

The third group, the Vaisyas, comprise two castes, the Joshu or astrologer, and the Achar or priests of local deities, presumably belonging to older cults adapted by Hinduism. They minister to Hinduised Newars, expound the Sastras, and perform other religious duties, acting in fact as some kind of Brahmans.

All these three groups are entitled to wear the thread, except some of the Srestha sub-castes. Some of these latter units, who serve as cooks and domestic servants, as well as other household menials, have been classified by one authority as Sudras.

Another caste, the Gwa or Manda Gaw, the cowherds are definitely Brahmanic Hindus and seem to have existed in Nepal for some centuries now, at least.

In addition to these, there are several castes of Newars who formerly belonged to the third order of Bauddhamargis described later, but are now more Hinduised than the other members of that group and separated from them to some extent.

These castes are : the Bhat, the Kou, the Nou, the Tati and the Katha. The Kou are merely blacksmiths, the Nou barbers, and the Katha dress wounds, and cut the umbilical cord at birth. The Tatis are not ordinary weavers but produce grave-clothes,

called *ponga*, a kind of cotton cloth, for shrouding the dead-bodies of the Newars, and also used in many religious ceremonies. The Bhats are also connected with funeral; they accept the death gifts made on the eleventh day after the funeral of Newars of any caste (but excluding outcastes).

The Bauddhamargis of Nepal are divided into three grades, of which the highest is that of the Bandyas, more commonly termed Banras. They are said to be the descendants of the Buddhist monks who were compelled to break their vow of celibacy and live as householders. They still live in the Viharas or convents, although with their wives and children.

The greater number of Bandyas, including even those who still minister to religious needs, follow secular occupations. All professions except foreign trade, and the work done by outcastes seem to be open to them. Their hereditary secular occupation is however that of gold and silversmiths, of which they have a monopoly in Nepal. So far as intermarriage and commensality is concerned, the different sections of Bandyas are on a footing of perfect equality. They do not however marry into or eat with any other group. The sole exception seems to be in the case of Brahmans. Only a Brahman lad can become a member of this group although not belonging to it by right of birth. He has to be adopted by a Gubhaju (Buddhist priest) and initiated before marriage.

The next group of Bauddhamargis, is that of the Udas. They are the class of traders and foreign merchants of Nepal. They however follow other occupations also, as working in stone, wood or metal, and they do not constitute any bar to intermarriage or commensality. They can accept food from Banras, and also admit a man of this group to theirs, but the converse does not hold.

The third group includes the bulk of the people. The Jyapoos, who stand at its head, are mainly cultivators and constitute at least half the population of Nepal. Besides the agriculturists, the Jyapoos have several sections (not sub-castes) following different occupations, the most important of which is perhaps that of the Kumhals or potters. The other members of the third group follow carpentry, oil-pressing, and other occupations:

This group of Newars is, however, largely Hinduised and rapidly becoming more so.

In this connection it should be noted, that in Newar society, occupations are hereditary, and members of one craft are not supposed to encroach upon the technical duties and rights of another. Some professions however do not bring living wages; thus the Nalli whose traditional occupation is to paint the eye of an image at a certain religious festival, certainly cannot hope to live by that alone. They have to supplement their earnings from hereditary pursuits with something else. Such people can have recourse to any of the general professions, as cultivation, petty trade, tailoring, and porter's work which are not the special privilege of any section of the people.

The duties inherited must however be performed as laid down, although the exigencies of the case may have prevented a caste or section from devoting itself to that work alone. A peculiarity of these castes is that most of them have some function or other to perform at the various religious festivals. The castes and hereditary occupational sections are in fact religious organisations as much as secular ones.

All the above three groups of Bauddhamargis are pure to the Newar Hindus *i.e.* the latter can accept water from their hands for drinking purposes. The Banras were specially honored as they were held to be the peers of Brahmans. The Brahmanic Hindus who have come in with the Gurkhas however, seem to consider all Bauddhas as *anācharanīya* *i.e.* impure for accepting water etc.

Levi ascribes the beginnings of Newar civilisation to Indian influence. The light of religion, according to him, came undoubtedly through the Buddhist missionaries who discreetly adapted their creed to suit the ruder people of Nepal. Before however their labors had borne fruit, the forces of Brahmanism burst in and largely destroyed their work, forcibly converting some, and compelling the celibate monks to marry. Levi, however, suggests that the lapse of the monks from celibacy was due, not so much to the oppression of Brahmans, as to the decadence of Buddhism itself. His view is that the married clergy, still living in their ancient convents, did not find their traditional religious

calling sufficient for the new needs brought about by family life, and had to adopt secular professions.

In this way the Bandyas were formed into a clearly defined social class, and the material condition of their existence, added to an imitation of Brahmans, quickly hardened class into caste. The religious aristocracy, which thus arose, regarded the ordinary layman as inferior, and the very natural unwillingness to share the privileges they possessed because of their former condition made the caste bounds more rigorous. Finally, the arts exercised in the convents, transmitted from father to son, attained a high degree of excellence, and as the knowledge was kept a secret in the monasteries, finally became monopolies.

On the other hand, the royal families of Nepal, the Lichchhavis (as well as Maillas) could scarcely obtain acceptance as true Kshatriyas without opposition. Their names were too well known in Buddhist annals and the tribes had been grouped by Manu among inferior castes as Vratya or fallen Kshatriyas. To wipe out this stain and take their rightful place among Kshatriyas, they followed the rules of caste with an excessive rigour, and thus led to the formation of a Kshatriya caste in Nepal, professing a mixed Bauddha and Brahmanic faith and thereby serving to unite the two religions.

Finally, the Brahmans who had brought the Saiva cult from India, had also introduced among their faithful, the regime of caste, modified it is true, by the needs of time and place. In this way were formed the two divisions in Nepal, one rigidly observing the laws of caste in the matter of marriage and commensality, the other hostile in principle to caste, but already modified by contact with the other. The religious and military aristocracies at their heads formed close parallels to those of the Hindus, and the power of example given by the superior classes, was effective in fostering the growth of caste among the lower orders of the people, through the force of imitation.

These considerations of social organisation, briefly sketched above, make it abundantly clear, apart from the authoritative opinion of Levi, that whether Hindu or Buddhist the culture of the Newars is distinctively Indian. The evidence from arts and crafts also supports this view.



The available facts in regard to metal work and carpentry, though not decisive, are of interest. The cleverest smiths in Tibet are the Newars who have gone there; while the Tibetans themselves are clumsy carpenters and jewellers. Moreover, formerly over a long period, the Nepalese were the architects of the temples, the sculptors of the Buddha statues and the ikon painters of Tibet, and there is no question that the Buddhist images, pictures and objects of art at present produced in Tibet are worthless compared to the art of former times. The fact that at the present moment the Tibetan lamas who follow these arts are far superior to the common craftsmen does not stand against this view, if it is remembered that Newar artisans were sent to the monasteries so far distant as the interior of Tartary to decorate the great Lamaseries.

The structure of the loom and the technique of weaving show that this art, also, did not come from the Tibetan side; the instruments for spinning likewise seem to have come from India.

The agricultural implements further support the view that the characteristic early culture of Nepal came from the Indian side. Although terracing and irrigation are employed in Tibet, the turning up of the soil is done not with the hoe, but by the Indian plough, drawn by a mixed breed of cattle obtained by crossing a male yak with a cow.

We now come to the suggestion that the style of building and architecture in Nepal is derived from China and Tibet. While the Chaityas follow the form of the earlier Buddhistic monuments of India, with some modifications, the characteristic examples of Nepalese temples are in a different style, unlike anything found in India proper, except in the far south, in the Kanara country. This is the so-called Pagoda style of architecture. The characteristics of these temples are that

- (i) they are built in several stages, each smaller than the one beneath, with
- (ii) sloping roofs and projecting eaves supported by inclined beams.
- (iii) They generally rise, not directly from the ground but from a square terrace.

The lowest stage is the sanctuary and is covered almost

invariably with red tiles. The upper storeys are covered with gilded plates of copper. As has been mentioned, the strong resemblance of these temples to the pagodas of China and Japan, in the absence of similar edifices in India proper, has led Hamilton and others to suggest a Chinese origin.

Levi, however, maintains that these pagodas represent a style of Indian religious architecture which has disappeared in India proper. He suggests that although the buildings are recent, not earlier than the 15 century A.D., yet the architecture reproduces without doubt forms of immemorial antiquity, and hints that they might be directly evolved from the early wooden architecture of India which preceded and acted as the model of the most ancient stone monuments of the country.

To explain the resemblance of the Chinese pagodas and Japanese temples, Levi suggests that the parallels are due to Newar influence. He supports his hypothesis with the facts that :

- (1) Newars have largely influenced art in China, and this is admitted in the annals.
- (2) Newar artisans were widely employed in Tibet, Tartary and many parts of China and this continued up to modern times.

And he gives, in his book on Nepal, a very interesting account of the building of a golden pagoda in Tibet, by the Emperor of China, in 1260 A.D. The artisans employed were all obtained from Nepal, and worked under a Newar master-builder. This artist, Arniko name, later on went to the Chinese court and became the master-builder and statue-founder of the Empire.

Havell has arrived at the same conclusions from a study of early and mediaeval Indian architecture. He suggests that the pagoda style in Nepal is founded upon the *Asana* type of temple architecture in India. The names of the Indian styles are derived from the figure within, in this case seated in a *yoga* attitude. The simplest form of it is a plain cubical cell with a flat roof or dome. When the artists sought to give importance to the shrine by additional height, they simply raised the roof by putting cube upon cube like a pyramid, and crowned the topmost one with a dome.

This Indian style, Havell suggests, was modified in the Himalayan districts (and also in the West Coast) because of the heavy rainfall. Flat terraced roofs are very inconvenient and they were therefore adapted to the needs of the place, just as in Bengal the local form of thatched house roof and temple dome with convex curvature was adapted for the same purpose. Havell adds that this modified type of temple-building passed to China with the Buddhist religion.

It is interesting to note that all the secular edifices of the Newars as well as the characteristic religious temples are in this style. Also, in spite of Hamilton, the fact remains that the style appeared to Kirkpatrick to be strikingly similar to the "wooden mundups" of India. From the pictures given in the different books, it is clear that a one-storeyed building in the Newar style and a modern *mandap* or *âtchâlâ* of India differ very little. The discussion of the ancient Indian forms of mandaps and dwelling houses by Havell strengthens this view.

The materials employed in the buildings of Nepal also point to their connection with India, and not with Tibet on the other side of the border. The Newar houses are generally of brick, the roofs always of tiles which, according to Purna-chandra Mukhopadhyay, of the Archæological Survey, are similar to the tiles dug out at Pataliputra. In Tibet, on the other hand, the houses are generally and necessarily made of stones held together with mud, the manufacture of bricks and tiles being out of the question there, owing to scarcity of fuel.

Whether the pagoda style followed the line of evolution suggested by Havell or not, the balance of evidence is in favour of an Indian origin (in the limited sense of earlier existence) of a prototype of the pagoda style. There has of course been interchange of ideas in this, as in other matters, between China and Nepal; but the architecture would seem to be essentially Indian.\* Such a conclusion is in harmony with the hypothesis formulated from the other data that the main elements of the characteristic early culture of the Newars came from India.

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\*Cf. paragraph on *Architecture* in Prof. Liang Chi Chao's article on "China's debt to India," published in this number.—Ed.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS.

By RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

The creature which lives its life, screened and sheltered in a dark cave, finds its safety in the very narrowness of its environment; and the economical providence of nature curtails and tones down its sensibilities to such limited necessity. But if those cave-walls are removed by some cataclysm, then either it must accept the doom of extinction, or carry on satisfactory negotiations with its wider surroundings.

[The human races will never again be able to go back to their citadels of high-walled exclusiveness. They have been exposed to each other, physically and intellectually. The shells, which have so long given them full security within their individual enclosures, have been broken, and by no artificial process can they be mended again. So we have to accept this fact, even though we have not yet fully adapted our minds to this changed environment of publicity, even though through it we may have to run all the risks entailed by the wider expansion of life's freedom.

A large part of our tradition is our code of adjustment which deals with the circumstances special to ourselves. These traditions, no doubt, variegate the several racial personalities with their distinctive colours,—colours which have their poetry and also certain protective qualities suitable to each different environment. We may come to acquire a strong love for our own colourful race speciality, but if that gives us fitness only for a very narrow world then, at the slightest variation in our circumstances, we may have to pay for this love with our life itself.

In the animal world there are numerous instances of complete race-suicide overtaking those who fondly clung to some advantage which later on became a hindrance in an altered dispensation. In fact the superiority of man is proved by his adaptability to extreme

surprises of chance,—neither the torrid nor the frigid zone of his destiny offering him insuperable obstacles.

There are some kinds of mental peculiarity which tend to fall more under pathology than psychology, that is to say, which have no universal significance. Such peculiarities are inoffensive so long as they keep to their own boundaries, but when carried outside, they either hurt those who possess them, or the others who are confronted by them, or perhaps ultimately both. For directly they come out of the environment of their origin they have to be judged by some universal standard of behaviour, by the moral standard which has the universal character of truth.

A man, with an abnormal appetite for acquisition, may be appreciated by his wife and other dear ones; but when this appetite of his is brought out in dealings with his neighbours, then the standard of conduct which is exclusively that of his own family circle will no longer serve. The religion, which makes it obligatory for a *thug* to strangle his fellow creatures must, for its true judgment, come under moral principles which do not peculiarly belong to his own community.

What I want to make clear is the fact that when, as in the present age, the human races have come out of their traditional reservation-fence into mutual contact, the reliance on a universal ethical standard is the only means which can save humanity from disruption into barbarism or death.

The late war which involved a vast number of peoples in its carnage and whose economic and moral consequence is even now troubling the atmosphere of a great part of the world, is merely an indication that in the hurry of the scientific progress of the West, which has made the human world physically almost one country, the cultivation of ethical ideals needful for this condition has been overlooked.

It has come as a great surprise on the races of man,—this sudden change from a life of comparative seclusion to that of mutual proximity, and will test to the full their moral adaptability. The peculiar qualities which gave special advantage to some of

them in former days may, in order to save those very people, have to give place to others of an opposite kind.

It is difficult for us to realise this, because the sunset clouds of the past, under their golden flourishes and blood-red magnificence, conceal approaching doom, and people are still talking in a language which hardly takes count of the impending night.

When we in Asia talk about re-adjustment in response to the world situation today, we forget that it should be directed to a future of new ideals and not to the mere shifting about of the methods of a past which is already declared nearly bankrupt. Therefore our dreams still bristle with the image of raised swords, darken with the vision of poison gas, glisten with gold streaks that are but the harbingers of death-dealing thunder-clouds.

Of course I know, from the point of view of prudence and practical politics, that a sudden and a complete change may not be possible, or may even be considered dangerous, and so the weapons of the past have yet to be used till they slip off our hands by the very absurdity of their anachronism. And is not their weight already proving too heavy, turning the living skin of man into an impervious sheath, his whole constitution into an iron safe? Is it not for the people the rigor of death itself,—this progressive stiffening of their muscles and hardening of their hearts?

In man, whose existence is not merely biological, the process of death first begins in his spiritual system and then it creeps into the other departments of his life. This has been the case with all the great civilisations that flourished for a period, and died when their spirit decayed. The continual dwindling in the proportion of food for our moral and spiritual nature has not troubled the political leaders of the present age, not even the scientific philosophers who are busy analysing the component parts of *what is*, and think it old-fashioned to bring into view a synthetic vision of *what should be*. The vastness of the race problem with which we are faced to-day will either compel us to train ourselves to moral fitness, in the place of merely external efficiency, or the complications arising out of it will fetter all our movements and drag us to our death.

When our necessity becomes urgently insistent, when the resources that have sustained us so long are exhausted, then our spirit puts forth all its force to discover some other source of sustenance, deeper and more permanent. This leads us from the exterior to the interior of our storehouse. When muscle does not fully serve us, we come to awaken intellect to ask for its help and are then surprised to find that is a greater source of strength for us than our physical power. When, in their turn, our intellectual gifts grow perverse, and only help to render our suicide gorgeous and exhaustive, our soul must seek an alliance with some power which is still deeper, yet further removed from the rude stupidity of muscle.

In the present age the human races have come close together. Their differences in language, tradition and degree of strength are so apparent, as to be a commonplace. Our first meeting has only recognised these differences, and in the place of geographical barriers it has thereupon set up the barriers of mutual misunderstanding.

Even the religious ministers, sent by the West to the East, whose profession it is to preach brotherly love, have in their sectarian pride and prudence, emphasised and exaggerated these differences more than any other body of men. They have produced the psychology which makes it comfortably easy for the military and the mercantile powers of their community to carry on their mission of depredation in alien countries helplessly open to their inroads.

This consciousness of difference has poisoned our literature, our history and philosophy and the education of our children,—it has invaded the frontier line of science where it touches sociology. The cultivation of intense race egotism is the one thing that has found its fullest scope at this meeting of men. In no period of human history has there been such an epidemic of moral perversity, such a universal churning up of jealousy, greed, hatred, and mutual suspicion. Every people, weak or strong, is constantly indulging in a violent dream of rendering itself thoroughly hurtful to others. In this galloping competition of

hurtfulness, on the slope of a bottomless pit, no nation dares to stop or slow down. A scarlet fever with a raging temperature has attacked the entire body of mankind, and political passion has taken the place of creative personality in all departments of life.

[It is well-known that when greed has for its object material gain then it can have no end. It is like the chasing of the horizon by a lunatic. To go on in a competition of multiplying millions is a steeplechase of insensate futility, that has obstacles, but no goal. It has for its parallel the fight with material weapons, weapons which must perpetually be multiplied, opening up new vistas of destruction, and evoking new forms of insanity in the forging of frightfulness.] Thus seems to have commenced the last fatal adventure of drunken Passion riding on an intellect of prodigious power.

When the condition of the world is so desperate, it will not in the least help if we in the East also join in this stampede towards a general annihilation. We must discover our salvation in some other power that has its basis upon sanity, and this power is moral. On its positive side it will work in the direction of unity, cultivating the spirit of sympathy and co-operation. On its negative side it will actively resist the aggression of evil by the moral weapon of complete ostracism, just as we exercise it in its physical form in the case of a fatal disease which is contagious. It will translate fight from its present depth of brutality to the moral altitude which belongs to the human. Through this, society will get rid of fighting as a definite profession.

The division between those who waste their life in cultivating the art of killing and those who labour to sustain them must be removed, and the full flow of humanity through our social organism must not be obstructed. That is to say, antagonism and reconciliation, acceptance and rejection, which taken together are the constant and natural features of life, must not be separated into technical departments, but, through moral tradition and training, be allowed to function over the whole of society. The development of intellectual and moral sympathy for one's fellow-



beings, the spirit of service and sacrifice, and the dauntless attitude of refusal towards evil of all kinds in the face of danger and death, must every where form the principal part of education.

Material force has its power in the physical blows it can inflict and therefore emulation goes on endlessly augmenting the means of dealing such blows. It can only come to a natural stop when man asserts the dignity of his spirit and says : "I am not afraid." In our weakness we maintain a material power which dominates us ; the power which is spiritual dwells in our strength, in our fearlessness, fortitude and spirit of sacrifice.

To-day, more than ever before in our history, the aid of this spiritual power is needed and therefore I believe its resources will surely be discovered in the hidden depth of our being. Pioneers will come to take up this adventure and suffer, and through suffering open out a path to that higher elevation of life in which lies our safety.

Let me, in reference to this, give an instance from the history of Ancient India.

There was a noble period in the early days of India when, to a band of dreamers, agriculture appeared as a great idea and not merely a useful fact. The heroic personality of Rāmachandra, who espoused its cause, was sung in popular ballads, which in a later age forgot their original message and were crystallized into an epic merely extolling some domestic virtues of its hero. However, it is quite evident, from the legendary relics still embedded in the story, that a new age ushered in by the spread of agriculture came as a divine voice to those who could hear. It lifted up the primeval screen of the wilderness, brought the distant near, and broke down all barricades. Men who had formed separate and antagonistic groups in their sheltered seclusions, were called upon to form a united people.

In the Vedic verses, we find constant mention of conflicts between the original inhabitants of this land and the colonists. There we find the expression of a spirit that was of mutual distrust and a struggle in which was sought either wholesale slavery or

extermination for the opponents, in the spirit of animals who live in the narrow segregation imposed upon them by their limited imagination and imperfect sympathy. This spirit would have continued in all its ferocious vigour of savagery had men failed to find the opportunity for the discovery that man's highest truth was in the union of co-operation and love.

The progress of agriculture was the first external step which led to such a discovery. It not only made a settled life possible for a large number of men living in close proximity, but it claimed for its very purpose a life of peaceful co-operation. The mere fact of such a sudden change from a nomadic to an agricultural condition would not have benefited man, if he had not developed therewith, for the guidance of his conduct, some inner principle of truth. We can realise, from our reading of the *Rāmāyana*, the birth of idealism among a section of the Indian colonists of those days, before whose mind's eye was opened a vision of emancipation rich with the responsibility of a higher life. The epic represents in its ideal the change of the people's aspiration from the path of conquest to that of reconciliation.

In the present time, as I have said, the human world has been overtaken by another vast change similar to that which had occurred in the epic age of India. So long, men had been cultivating, almost with a religious fervour, that mentality which is the product of racial isolation; poets sang, in a loud pitch of bragging, of the exploits of their popular fighters; money-makers neither felt pity nor shame in the unscrupulous dexterity of their pocket-picking; and diplomats scattered lies in order to reap concessions from the devastated future of their victims. Suddenly the walls that separated the different races are seen to have given way, and we find ourselves standing face to face.

This is a great fact of epic significance. Man, suckled at the wolf's breast, sheltered in the brute's den, brought up in the prowling habit of depredation, suddenly discovers that he is **Man**, and that his true power lies in yielding up his brute power for the freedom of spirit.

There are a few great countries,—China is among them and also Japan,—that have found their civilisation from the soil of nature, the mother who taught them the lesson of life, the music of which, flowing in the blood of their children, revealed itself in a vast symphony of human relationship.

They have loved Mother Nature's rivers and hills, they have fed their eyes upon the blue of her sky and the tender green of her corn shoots, they have enjoyed the dance of the invisible rhythm in all the forms and colours with which she surrounds them; they have known that the subtle intricacies of human existence find their perfect unity in the harmony of interdependence, never in the vigorous exercise of elbows in the midst of a mutually pushing multitude, clamouring for a solitary peak of self-determination; they have never indulged in the arrogant assertion of independence which only belongs to the barren rocks and to the desert wastes grey with the pallor of death.

This spirit of interdependence is the spirit of meekness in life which gives it the unseen and inexhaustible strength to inherit the earth that we find in the green grass whose banners of conquest are humble and yet ever victorious. Therefore I would bring to you the cry of this New Age which is waiting to close the blood-stained pages of its past and to hear the epic that will voice its hope in a great song.

I am afraid, however, you will find it difficult to put faith in a poet's dream. I can guess how disappointed you must feel at not hearing anything from me of a practical nature. There is a proverb in Sanskrit that you must not expect fruits from a sugar cane. As a poet I can only have my vision. It may not be as useful as, say, your fishing rod, but it may produce the same effect as the spring breeze. Very often it is of more importance merely to attract your eyes towards the path rather than encumber your back with a ladder. That ladder appears so substantially practical that, in the joy of its possession, one often forgets to enquire if there is any height to be scaled.

I would only remind you that the new age has brought a new King, and only those who have the imagination to see the New Comer, and the loyal sympathy to receive Him in a proper manner, will find his own true place.

So long we have been serving our tribal idol. We have not yet awakened to the fact that the tribe has become a shadow, that its temple has come down to the dust, and that the idol lies shattered. It will be a piece of wasteful folly to imagine that we can still propitiate it with the blood of human victims and with food plundered from the famished.

The God of Humanity has arrived at the gates of the ruined temple of the tribe. Though He has not yet found His altar, I ask the men of simple faith, wherever they may be in the world, to bring their offering of sacrifice to Him, and to believe that it is far better to be wise and worshipful, than to be clever and supercilious; I ask them to claim their right of manhood to be friends of men, and not their right of a particular proud race who may boast of the fatal quality of being the rulers of men. We should know for certain that rulers will no longer be tolerated in the new world, as it basks in the open sunlight of mind and breathes life's free air.

In the geological age of the infant earth the demons of physical force had their full sway. The angry fire, the devouring flood, the fury of the storm, continually kicked the earth into frightful distortions. These titans have at last given way to the reign of life. Had there been spectators in those days, who were clever and practical, they would have wagered their last penny on these titans and would have waxed hilariously witty at the expense of the helpless living speck taking its stand in the arena of the wrestling giants. Only a dreamer could have then declared with unwavering conviction that those titans were doomed because of their very exaggeration, as are, to-day those formidable qualities which, in the parlance of school-boy science, are termed Nordic.

I ask you, once again, let us, the dreamers of the East and the West, keep our faith firm in the Life that creates and not in the Machine that constructs,—in the power that hides its force and blossoms in beauty, and not in the power that bares its arms and chuckles at its capacity to make itself obnoxious. Let us know that the Machine is good when it helps, but not so when it exploits life; that Science is great when it destroys evil, but not when the two enter into unholy alliance.

Before I conclude I ask your leave to say that I believe in the individuals in the West; for on no account can I afford to lose my faith in Man. They also dream, they love, they intensely feel pain and shame at the unholy rites of demon worship that tax the whole world for their supply of bleeding hearts. They cherish in their minds the creative faith that by its magic secretly fashions the images of a perfect expectation in the midst of the boisterous dissipations of unbelief.

In the life of these individuals will be wedded East and West; their lamps of sacrifice will burn through the stormy night along the great pilgrim tract of the future, when the names of the statesmen who tighten their noose round the necks of the foreign races will be derided and the triumphal tower of skulls heaped up in memory of war-lords will have crumbled into dust.

# VISVA-BHARATI BULLETIN.

## I.

### Conversation between Rabindranath Tagore and Governor Yen, of Shansi, China.

*(Reported).*

G. I heard of your name many years ago, and was delighted when I knew that you were coming here to visit my province.

T. I was greatly honoured by your invitation and I shall always remember your kindness.

G. The teachers and students have been longing for you to come here.

T. I had heard much, from my friend Mr. E., about this province and I have been full of admiration for its administration, which I understand is so wise and helpful. I also heard by chance some thoughts that had been expressed by Your Excellency about our modern problems which seemed to me to be very suggestive, so that I was happy that this meeting could be arranged.

G. When Mr. E. came last year I had a talk with him about your institution and I admired very much what I heard about your work.

T. In these critical times, when the old order is giving way to the new, no standard of efficiency has yet been evolved. At a period when so much corruption is abroad, a Governor with farsighted wisdom, who is able to make his province an object lesson to all other provinces, is doing great work.

G. This is but the duty of any officer. I have no anxiety for results, I am only trying to do my best.

T. That is an ideal of the East, not to look for results but to take up one's duty. The Gita expresses this thought when it says you have only your right in the doing of your work and not in its fruits.

G. I agree with what you have said about our two countries. Between India and China the best of relations existed long ago. At this time we need that these relations should be deeper and more profound than ever.

T. When I had my invitation to China, from my friends in Peking,

I was greatly delighted. I felt it was a great opportunity for me to renew this deeper spiritual relationship which was, as Your Excellency says, established long ago. Though I am old, and no longer strong, I accepted it with great joy. Already, from the results, I see that this acceptance was fortunate; and that possibly this visit may be fruitful for Asia, if India and China can join hands, not to further any political ambitions, but to build up a great civilisation of ideals.

G. I quite agree with you.

T. It is a sad thing that the times have changed. India, when she came to China, was at the zenith of her civilisation, in the fulness and plenitude of her power. Now our people have degenerated and that ancient stream of idealism no longer flows over Asia,—it has been driven deeply underground. It is the same in China. A disruption of life, a process of social destruction, has been going on; and what we should try to do is to work together for giving new hope and new strength to the people who have lost faith in ideals and who are merely repeating the habit of the past and not producing anything, nor adapting their thought to this new age. This is what has made us suffer so much. When society is living it can adapt itself to new conditions, but when it is dead it merely copies its own past and cannot build its future. This has happened both to India and China and this is what we must change.

G. I quite agree that degeneration is going on, and I am sure that the fault of this degeneracy lies in our own selves. We have permitted it, and it is for us to rebuild.

T. Wisdom in the East has demanded that the living soul of man should dwell in the whole of society, that society should be dominated throughout by some living spiritual ideal and not that one part of society should have all the power in its keep. This power should be evenly distributed among the people. Our social system depended upon mutual obligation, upon ethical ideals accepted by all the people. In the West political life is concentrated in a particular group of men or in some machine, and its obligations are borne by some special group. For this reason the moment that the political life is threatened the whole life is threatened. In the East whilst the military and the ambitious men fought their battles the people as a whole remained unmolested and therefore their civilisation survived for centuries and is still living. The time has come to renew the life of the people, who must learn to look after their own affairs. There must be a living adjustment and a new current of vitality,—a new stream of ideals must

supply the people with a living purpose. This cannot be done by organisation, by some mere machine that can be put into the hands of some single individual, as in the West.

G. You have not said yet what method must be employed to rebuild the whole of civilisation, or to do away with this Western idea of organisation.

T. I do not want merely to indicate the ideal, in words. We have started this work in our own neighbourhood in India,—the reconstruction of village life. Our people had come to a point where they were merely carrying on their life in a feeble manner, anyhow. They had lost their zest in life since toil was heaped upon toil whilst the fruits went to others who were cleverer. It is our idea to strengthen their life, to stimulate their intelligence, and to bring some joy into their existence. The people of the country will only live when their life represents the best ideals of the country, when it is full with music, and dance, with drama and ceremony, with festival and poetry. There can be no real civilisation when the best ideals are concentrated in the hands of a few powerful men, whilst the bulk of the population has neither the leisure nor the mind to enjoy, and remains desolate. In order to overcome this weakness we have been trying to get the villagers to realise that their destiny rests in their own hands, that they must be able to think and to act and to gather around them those who will not look down upon them as inferiors but who will regard them as kin.

G. I agree with what you have said about the ideals of the East, and I give you one instance. The West honours inventors simply because of their capacity to invent, even though that invention may be purely for their own profit. In China only those inventors, and we have many instances of this, were admired who produced some good thing for society and not merely for their own advantage or for unsocial purposes.

T. This has been true of all great men both in India and China. In their creative work they have devoted their energies to the whole people because they regarded their special gift as a responsibility which must be dedicated to the public good. They never thought to trade on this gift from God for their own self aggrandisement.

G. This is specially true in the realm of Agriculture. All over China we have built temples to Agriculture, and therefore it became the habit to admire any invention which could be made use of by all the people. I often



have occasion to correct my friends on this point, when they express their admiration for some man for his method of inventing or for the way he has succeeded in making money out of his invention and a name for himself.

In regard to the reform of the village I entirely agree with you. I feel very profoundly on this matter because the methods which you are using are exactly those which I myself have been trying to put into practice. Man was born to be happy and if anything stands in his way it is the duty of the Government or other political power to try and prevent anyone from interfering with a man's developing his own individuality and habits. The family is our unit, and if the family is happy then all are happy. It is the duty of the Government to remove all barriers that prevent the achievement of happiness. We have an old Chinese saying that it is for the plant to study how to die,—that is how to develop its fruit, how to ripen it. This is best assisted by leaving the plant alone, then the fruit, having ripened, will duly drop off. The same is true for man. If he is left free and undisturbed, if he is physically and mentally alert, and if there is nothing to disturb the growth within him of a refined spirit, then alone will he come to perfection. The Government is not responsible for bringing about this result, but it is the duty of the Government to do all that is possible to remove physical and moral disturbances so that such growth may not be impeded.

T. I also believe it to be the duty of Government to enable people to remove their own obstacles and not to remove the obstacles for them. By removing opportunity for the use of initiative, the people are left truly helpless. We should give strength to the people but never take upon us the work which should be theirs, by keeping all power and responsibility in our own hands. A wise government will not exercise its power, but will allow that power to grow out of the mind and capacity of the people. I was glad when in China I found how little it has been the custom for the Government to interfere with the life of the people. This non-interference is best because it allows a natural wisdom to develop. Interference is too often only another form of that obstruction which is negative, and which prevents the spirit of man finding its full expression. Let all sages and great men, all well-wishers of the people, help the people to discover their own inner light within them and never offer them that light from outside.

G. I entirely agree with you that each individual should be free to develop his own ideals. But the difficulty here is that the condition of the people is quite different from what it used to be. There was a time when

the strong, the clever and the rich wanted to benefit others; now they only want to interfere with the benefit of others. The rich man wants to take advantage of everybody else. We must find some means of preventing injustice being done to the people, and this responsibility must rest upon the Government.

T. Government may at any time be either good or bad. We cannot depend upon its uniformity of goodness, and though, you, as Governor, may have every good intention, and may want to help your people, your successor may upset everything and introduce chaos. If the people are solely dependant upon the sympathy or help of some person who temporarily holds sway, then their situation is precarious. If, before you retire, you can somehow infuse power into their own hands, if you can distribute it and let them realise that it is for them to help themselves, then when you are no longer with them they may stand upon their own legs. Then your work may continue, even through the people themselves. If you once begin to depend upon organisation or machinery, it will always be captured by men of ambition and will be used by self-seekers for their own ends. There are but few men of your type who may be trusted to use the machinery for the benefit of the people.

G. It is for the Government to do justice to the people, but with regard to Shansi, I agree that political power is not the force which is capable of doing justice. Nor is any other power able to deliver justice unless there is justice among the people themselves. Everything depends upon the individuality of the people. Justice is after all the duty of everybody, and the people must have this sense of justice among themselves.

T. I have come, Your Excellency, to propose to you some way of blending our ideals so that some great civilisation may again be the outcome of this meeting of the ideals of India with those of China. The inspiration that is aroused out of the union of our hearts is even now working in the depth of our being, and though we are lacking in so many respects in India yet we also can combine with you in giving this ideal a practical shape.

Unless the whole people is happy no individual can have true happiness. Unless all are wealthy no man, however rich, can have real wealth. The Sun does common service for us all. If however in the night only my lamp is lit and the rest of the world is dark, that lamp has no real illumination for me. This ideal is waiting for our acceptance. The multi-millionaire possesses power in his own hands and raises his tower

of strength at the expense of the world. But I want to give the people the responsibility for their own destiny, so that through their self-respect they may help themselves. In this let us work together. I have been asking Mr. E. to come with some members of his staff to take up some such work in China, just as I hope the day will come when you will send men to help us. I feel that India did once send of her best to China, and once more she must come both to learn and to give. I shall ask your co-operation in return. There must be some practical work in which we should be able to help you, and you us, so that literally we may join hands.

G. Is there anything that I can do?

T. I have already occupied too much of your time to talk over details with Your Excellency. I ask you to discuss these with Mr. E. I shall only be too glad if you can do everything possible to help him in his work of discovering how the villages may really be helped to regain that richness of life which they once possessed.

G. This was my own idea. The present material civilisation has developed greatly, and if once again our moral civilisation could gain control of the material it would be so much the better for all of us. These two aspects of our life must travel along together in harmony and must not be arrayed against one another.

T. True. I quite agree. If there is no moral basis, mere material foundations cannot maintain prosperity for long. Like the tree on thin soil, we shall die of exhaustion. On the other hands moral civilisation cannot be good and final in itself, it can only be healthy when it makes it possible for material civilisation to attain its highest purpose.

G. I welcome your ideal and shall hope in return to send to you some men from this province. I hope that you will be able to extend your work in India and that I may assist it in China.

T. I depart then with the hope that you will make it possible for us to help in this work, the work of building up the life of the soil, and through this spirit of mutual sympathy and co-operation help us to exchange friends and students. It will be a beautiful sight when Indians come to your Chinese villages and Chinese come to our Indian villages, not in order that they may get rich, but to work together as brothers. It is a great work to produce life together, to come down from our conventional altitude to the soil, not to acquire there learning or science but to find inspiration, to unite in helping to produce the material and spiritual necessities of life. Let it be known that it is only through the amelioration of the lot of all individuals in all countries,

that real progress can come. Please accept this ideal not merely for your own people in this particular province but as a service to humanity. People who remain in darkness are being exploited and this is becoming a problem for which the whole world is responsible. So long as men are willing to suck the life of humanity to swell up their own wealth and power, humanity will go down to its extermination. Together we must work against this. Can we not as friends work together in memory of our great friendship of the past. I feel drawn to your people and if in any way I can be of help to them I shall be only too glad.

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## II

### Rabindranath's Answers to Questions by the Students of Tsing Hua College.

(Reported).

Q. What is your conception of God?

A. Our conception of God is different from that of the Christians. It is both immanent and transcendent. The New Testament idea, that of Christ, has little in common with that of the Jew, for whom God was both jealous and exclusive. But Christ's idea has something in common with the idea of the East and of India, the idea of God as related to human beings, in bonds of love, as Father, Friend and Lover. His meaning was that God was related to us in a spiritual relationship of love and this spiritual relationship you may look on as that of a father to his children, or of friend to friend, or of lover to lover. But this is immaterial. The important idea is, that human beings are related to an Infinite Person, that they are not like so much drift-wood, that they have a personal root in an Infinite Personality, which we name God.

But you ask further: "How do you know there is a God?"

This is a difficult question. Let me answer according to my own light. This physical world you know because you have eyesight, you can recognise light because you have appropriate sense organs. Thereby your physical organism is in intimate relation with something big and permanent,—this world. If your physical organism had no such background it would be a bubble, a nothing. Your very blood too has elements in common with the streams and rivers. It is the same with all the particles of your body,—cells,

atoms and molecules. You know therefore that the realisation of your physical organism depends upon the realisation of this great physical world.

But is the physical body the most important part of your self? Is it not a fact that your body itself gives expression to a personality in the centre of your life? My personality finds expression in my body; my eyes, for instance give expression to that personality. If then you have no doubt as to the reality of your physical body because it is related to some wider eternal reality, this physical world, and if you have a personality which you recognise to be more real than your physical organism, do you mean to say that this personality is a bubble, a *maya*, an illusion, that it has no significance?

Your eyes grope for light in a dark room. You are miserable because you cannot see. So our personality seeks its own fulfilment, its reality, where it can have its freedom,—seeks it in other personalities, in friends. This personality not only seeks other human personalities, but it is always changing. Our friends may become enemies. There is death. So my personality needs the assurance of reality just as much as my body does. That is why it craves the touch of some Infinite Personality. To this infinite personality I give the name God.

Q. What is this relation of God to Man?

A. As my physical body has its physical relationship, so my personality has its personal relationship. You have to breathe air, you are standing upon the floor. These things we have in common. But our personality has qualities which are different, which are not physical qualities. It finds its highest joy in the life of love, in father, in friend, in wife, in other human beings. It seeks reality in union with other personalities, and when it realises perfect unity then it is glad.

In this unity our personality finds truth. And, in order that its craving for such truth may be satisfied, there must be a foundation of unity somewhere in which we can find permanent shelter, and be happy. Argument does not help us here, but men in this world have procured direct evidence of God in their own personality; they have received, in what they call the soul, the infinite touch of an infinite personality. Supposing you are blind and I have eyesight and I describe light to you, but you do not believe in it. You will say it is all a hallucination. You may even say that only the blind are wise because they do not see. Maybe from the point of view of the blind you will be right. In the same way, all the evidence from men of spiritual vision, goes to shew that in the centre of our

existence is this infinite personality, and because our own personality is related to this infinite personality in a bond of love which is not merely physical, so man is related to God.

Q. Is it then a privilege to live?

A. I have enjoyed human relationships, I have enjoyed the sunrise. Poverty and Disease there are; they come and they disappear, but no one can take away from you light and beauty. If you had to buy sunlight in the market place you would have gone destitute to get it. We are the guests of a great King who is lavish in his hospitality. Enjoy it therefore if you have the power to enjoy. You are a miserable creature if you have not, and can only spend all your time preparing for examinations.

Q. What then is Sin?

A. Sin according to our Indian idea, has never been the breaking of a commandment, or of a law, or of some criminal code, which can be punished by king, or government. We say that the end of human life is to find emancipation from self, in order to realise communion with God, with the Infinite Soul. Such communication is possible through the realisation in love of our own soul through all souls.

Buddhism has its two aspects. On the one side, emancipation from the grip of self. This is negative. The positive aspect is in love of the Infinite, love of all creatures, because through that you gain truth. Obstruction lies in the imprisonment of life, of the soul. When we break through the prison wall of self we find freedom to communicate, to come into touch with this infinite being.

Sin is that which obstructs us in gaining our ultimate end the realisation of the supremacy of truth through love. Passion, hatred and desire are great hindrances, for they accentuate the life of self. But the one great faculty of the soul is sympathy or love, which transcends the boundaries of self. Through love you come into intimate touch with others. Through love you enter the All. Therefore love is the one medium which gives you access to the great unity of soul; so that all passions which prevent the pursuit of this love, this sympathy, are sins. Through killing a man for instance, this truth of unity is clouded. In India we have similarly included the killing of animals and have advocated "*ahimsā*," or "non-killing". If you deliberately kill an animal for selfish purposes it is a sin, as it is a sin, for the sake of mere sport, to shoot a bird. What about shooting a tiger?—you will ask. Though I am almost a Buddhist I draw the line there. To save other lives I would be willing to kill a tiger, for I

should be killing the spirit of violence which is objective in the tiger, and which would be subjective in my passion. Love is the goal, freedom is the means. That which keeps us in the prison-house of self, in our own separateness, is sin.

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### III.

#### **Oriental Studies in Italy.**

(Extract from an article by Prof. G. Tucci).

*Translated by Sm. Felicita Chaudhuri.*

It is not difficult to explain how it is that the Orientals throughout have till now almost completely ignored us, especially when one thinks of the small headway made by the Italian language in the Orient. Consequently it came as a real revelation to us when some of the best young intellects of modern India,—for example: Dr. Kalidas Nag, already favourably known in the intellectual circles of Europe for his admirable endeavours to enlighten us Occidentals about the essential and characteristic aspect of contemporary Indian thought; Suniti Kumar Chatterji, professor of Philology at the University of Calcutta, who combines with the severe learning of the man of science the geniality of the artist; Dr. Vaidya professor of Sanskrit and Pali in the Sangli College of Poona, from whom we have now got a very good study of *Madhyamika*,—have all come to Europe with the aim of perfecting themselves in the method of scientific research and of taking the doctor's degree in France or Germany. On their way back home, they stayed amongst us in Italy, and by personally approaching our Oriental scholars they have been able to convince themselves that our scientific contributions, if few in number, are of an indisputable value, and that the interest which their country and their literature arouse amongst us is perhaps much more sincere than that of our colleagues on the other side of the Alps.

So favourable has been the impression received by these Indian scholars, that none of them have gone back to their country without some volume or work of Suali, or Formichi, or Pavolini, or some reference noted from the Journal of the Italian Asiatic Society or from the Bulletin of Oriental

studies. It will be really due to them if in the intellectual circles of India they continue, as I trust they will, to remember Italy, and not only to appreciate the little we have done in the domain of Oriental studies, but also to feel some interest in our literature and our language, which were not unknown, after all, to the great Rammohun Roy. It is not only these scholars that are at least able to read Italian, for recently I have had the rare pleasure of being asked to send Italian books to India. The knowledge of our language is beginning also to be diffused in their literary and artistic circles: Pramatha Chaudhuri, for instance, critic and essayist, one of the more open-minded men of Bengal, in a recent letter to me, after paying a tribute of high praise to Italian culture, in reply to my advice to translate Leopardi into Bengali, writes:

I know Italian just enough to read prose, but I have to perspire with your poetry in order to enjoy it. For instance, D'Annunzio in his poetry is an author difficult for me, while his prose comes to me quite easily. I know Leopardi and I think you are right in holding that in form and substance he approaches our poets more than any other modern writer of Europe; but he differs greatly from them as well. There is a serenity in all Indian pessimism that we cannot find amongst your poets and philosophers of pessimistic tendencies. Can you imagine an Indian philosopher writing in the same way as Nietzsche? Sanskrit literature is without warmth, and is too disciplined to be able to burst out in a lyric cry. The spirit of the Dharma-shastra seems to control her. The poetic genius of Leopardi, in my opinion, was too great to be able to be restrained by his philosophy.

This judgment demonstrates that the person who writes it has a sufficient knowledge of our literature and our authors while, on the other hand, perhaps none of us has such a knowledge of contemporary Bengali literature, although the names of Bankim Chandra, Tagore, Sarat Chatterjee have attracted the admiring attention of intellectuals throughout the whole world.

I feel almost sure, that this preliminary interest roused in India, concerning Italian literature and science, will be the first step to much more frequent and intimate relations and fruitful interchanges between the two countries, which have got perhaps many more points of contact than is apparent to a superficial observer; and then it will be a noble solace and matter of pride to the neglected cultivators of these studies, which are wrongly considered foreign and regarded with indifference, to have made known our country for the first time to a people who, through an admirable efflorescence of thought, are rapidly approaching the full maturity of their destiny. I believe that if this work of sympathetic approach, that has been initiated to-day amongst a small section of specialists, whose common



study urges them to keep in frequent touch with one another, could be continued and widened, then the day will not be far distant when we shall also see plenty of Indian students in our Universities, such as are found in the educational institutions of America, England, France and Germany.

After all there are subjects which perhaps in no other country can be studied better than in Italy,—law, history of art, archaeology, philosophy,—all studies which Orientals seem to cultivate particularly. The sources of jurisprudence are to be found amongst us, and our museums, our galleries, our cities, offer surroundings so exquisitely suitable for the formation of an artistic education, as perhaps no other country can do. While, from our archaeologists, Oriental students could learn not only to understand more closely the classical world that, from the age of Alexander, made its influence felt even over India, and during the Roman Empire exchanged messages with China; but they could moreover be trained in that severe method of research, that technique of excavation, and that ability to find in literary sources the most minute sign, which enables one to solve difficult questions of ancient topography or to discover archaeological treasures.

The Orient is very much in need of good archaeologists. Buddhistic India,—the India of the Chinese pilgrims, Fa-Hien, Huen-Tsang, I-Tsin, who have left us their detailed and perfect narratives of voyages,—is still waiting to be excavated. Mysterious China, whose soil hides artistic and historic treasures of inestimable value,—the tortoise-shell used for divinatory purposes and countersigned by ancient dynastic names, which the critic was inclined till a short time ago not to regard as authentic; or the tombs of the Han age,—which testify that this soil is nearly virgin still. The Siberian steppes, which if explored could perhaps open new chapters in Asiatic history, are untouched. It is true that the Japanese people have begun to send into China and into north Asia archaeological missions, but it is quite certain that, for the exploration especially of a prehistoric land, nothing is better than some six months' attendance in the classes held by the professors in our museums, and a course of practical assistance in some of our expeditions of excavation.

After all, it is nearly time to consider Oriental studies in another light. Sanskrit may have lost in the eyes of philologist the importance it used to have fifty years ago; it is no longer considered as a primitive language, but only as a dialect, notwithstanding that it is perhaps more than others akin to the Indo-European languages, which theory comparative grammar tries to revive. Though allied to many elements undoubtedly ancient, it

contains many others altogether recent. But this does not imply that Sanskrit has lost its importance altogether. In the place of an interest purely scientific, and in a way abstract, there is rather a substitution of another much more vital and immediate. In Sanskrit has been written the best of India's thoughts,—her immense literature on which stands the foundation of her modern culture, and which as it reveals to us the tormenting spiritual process, explains her soul, her aspirations, her tendencies, and the various aspects of her present civilisation, that to many seem so mysterious and so full of secrets. The world has in a way become smaller; the distance which separates us from Calcutta, from Peking and from Tokio have become absurdly small. The Extreme Orient is no more so far out of the orbit of our usual route as to permit us to neglect it, as we did half a century ago.

So I think that it would be wise to inject new life into Oriental studies, considering them not only as a group of subjects for learned research, but also as efficacious means to diffuse amongst ourselves a more general knowledge of the modern Asiatic civilisations. In order to do that, we must not confine ourselves to the study of ancient languages or to the Oriental classical literature, but interpret and spread also that of the modern literature and the literary dialects of the East. The moment has perhaps not yet arrived to establish amongst us a Tibetan chair as there is in France, in Germany and in England, but I do not see why we could not establish in Italy, and especially in Rome near the Oriental school, which is perhaps one of the best in Europe for Semitic studies, an official chair for the literary dialects of modern India, or for Japanese. But will this be understood in a country like ours, where they do not want to acknowledge even the real importance of the study of European languages, which have only a secondary place in our University?

Yet, there is already a tendency to bring together Orient and Occident, and as it happens, it is the Orientals that are coming to meet us first. It is a collaboration that they propose to us with their most representative men, first amongst whom deserves to be mentioned Rabindranath Tagore. Just with this object he has now founded a new movement, the Visva-bharati, which as is mentioned in its programme, proposes to spread the knowledge and effect the association of the Asiatic and European civilisations, with the purpose of bringing one day to the light a work which will be fruitful of the good of all humanity. I would wish that this desire could also be ours, in order that our activity, besides cultivating purely technical

and scientific research, should help to cement fraternal union and a sympathetic mutual understanding between the old Occident and the Orient, doubtless more old historically, but perhaps also more healthy and young in spirit.

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#### IV.

##### **Address to Rabindranath on behalf of the Jewish Community in China.**

*(In the house of Mr. Kadoorie.)*

I find myself to-night in the presence of a distinguished assembly of men and women who have gathered to honour one who is the light of Asia, Dr. Rabindranath Tagore.

I desire here to express my sense of deep appreciation and gratitude to our dear host for having given me the opportunity, perhaps the only one in my life, of welcoming such a distinguished guest. Dr. Tagore is a man of rare nobility of soul, a man who has climbed to heaven and wrested for us some glimpse of visions which are a delight and a feast to the eye. He is indeed the king of Oriental Poetry.

Our Sages of the Talmud have enjoined upon us to beware of praising individuals in their presence, for they have seen deep into the soul of human nature and knew the pain it would cause the really great, to have their eulogies sung before them. My feelings, however, are too strong to be entirely curbed even by such advice.

I hope you will excuse my telling you here of how I first came to know of the poetry of our famous guest. Some years ago I wrote and published a book of verse entitled "The Wedding of Death". In this book I tried to bring to the mind a vision showing that fear of death should be overcome and that death was only the birth of another life.

One of the critics of my book stated that he found some resemblance between it and the works of Dr. Tagore. This immediately aroused my great interest and it was in this way that I discovered a field of poetry, that was indeed a revelation to me. Thanks to Dr. Tagore, an inspired vision of a new world was put before my eyes.

With your permission I will refer to three points to-night.

The first, is the atmosphere created by Dr. Tagore's Poetry—the second, the influence of his poetry on the present generation of the Jews, and

the third of his message to Oriental Nations to retain their old culture and civilisation, again with special reference to the renaissance of Judaism in Palestine.

To my mind I find his poetical works based on the purity, beauty and sanctity of life.

It is sufficient to feel his delicate touch to bring one into a world filled with purity, beauty and sanctity.

To read his Gitanjali is to have the universe transformed in one's eyes into the temple of God.

His conception of the Deity is not confined to a personal or national God, but to the universal God, who is to be found everywhere and in everything.

We are mere instruments in the hand of our Creator who sounds on us the melodies of life, of death, of joy and of sorrow.

To read of Dr. Tagore's poetry is sufficient to fill one's heart with a great love for all forms of life.

To read of his songs in the morning will enable you to meet the evening with purity of thought and peace of soul.

The greatness of Tagore is not due to the heights of beauty which dwell in him, or to the sweetness of the music and rhythm contained in his songs. It is due to the holy atmosphere which you find throughout his verses. In these you will find not only an æsthetic joy, but also a nobility of outlook on life. You will find yourself in the presence of a modern Psalmist who draws the same spiritual music as David drew when he played upon the harp.

I felt this resemblance to the Psalms especially when I read Tagore's Gitanjali which was translated into Hebrew by the famous David Frishman. I feel that in translating this book from Bengali to Hebrew, that is, from one oriental language to another, it has retained the soul that was in the original work.

It is no uncommon sight to see many of our Hebrew pioneers in Palestine who break stones in the streets, drain the marshes, build bridges and construct houses during the day, retire after sunset, and read either of our poet Bialik, or of the songs of Tagore.

His work has brought home to many the gems to be found in the Literature of the Orient; and has returned to many, the thoughts and ideas that have been lost to them through long contact with foreign civilisations.

One moonlight night while walking on the hills in Jerusalem a great

Hebrew writer said to me "I wonder if you have realized how near Tagore's poetry is to ours and how justified is his call to return to the mentality as expressed by our prophets of old. Is not the poetry of Bialik and the theory of Aham H'Am a call to the young generation of Israel to return to the spirit of old, and is not this the aim of Zionism?"

In speaking of this, my third point, I am encouraged by having read an article in Dr. Tagore's Review stating his sympathy with this cause. It is a fallacy to suppose that Zionism is based upon materialism and not idealism. The aims of Zionism are twofold, namely, the return to Jewish culture, and a Jewish land.

Herzl, the creator of modern Zionism said at the first Zionist Congress that the return to Zion must be preceded by a return to Judaism. That is the tragedy of our generation. Our weakness manifests itself when we disregard our own vineyard.

As Bialik has said :

I look forward to Palestine, because there, in sacred labor, we shall find unity. the land is still poor, and many and heavy must be the sacrifices that are needed to develop it. But "better is a piece of dry bread eaten in peace than plenty in a house which is filled with quarreling." Till now we have worked here in exile, and our work—I may say it without boasting—has been fruitful. But still more fruitful must be the work which we shall now begin in Palestine.

It is characteristic of the Jewish spirit that Dr. Weizmann, the great Jewish statesman, has laid the foundation of the Hebrew University, a spiritual centre for Judaism. He tells of his ideals in the following words uttered in a speech in New York :

Even on this day we are still looking for miracles, but reality is infinitely more miraculous than legendary miracles. This modest little University of which the foundation stone was laid in 1918, to the sound of guns, within ten miles of the front, this little University is being erected on Mount Scopus, one of the hills which overlook Jerusalem. On this very mountain, thousands of years ago, stood the tent of Titus, and before that tent were led the prisoners out of Jerusalem into captivity. Over this very hill on which to-day stand the first institutes of the future University, passed our judges, our kings, our prophets, our young children and our young soldiers—into captivity and oblivion. Great Rome had proclaimed "*Judaea capta*, Judaea is finished," and the mighty Roman state swept over little Judaea. Of Titus nothing is left but a marble arch which is the admiration of tourists in Rome, but *Judaea Capta* lives again, and from this very hill a new siege will be directed against Jerusalem, not with guns and not with stones and not Roman legions but with science and with art and with social justice: **Ki beti bet tefila yikore l'chol ha-amim.** And that is a miracle which should inspire not only those who build the University but all those who contribute toward this building. It will be a source of pride and strength and encouragement to you, to your children and to your children's children until the end of all time.

The Talmud says that Israel did not aspire to be freed and come back to their own country in order to dominate others. but in order to find a haven of refuge to develop their spiritual life without let or hindrance. In fact, our aspirations to return to Palestine are in order to accomplish there that which we are unable to do here. We wish to revive our language, our country, our institutions, our schools, our agriculture, our Jewish soul and prophetic ideals.

We hope to be able to demonstrate before the world what a Jewish liberated nation can do in its own home. As Dr. Weizmann has said, the song of Psalms will be heard from Dan to Beersheba, not only in Palestine but everywhere.

I wish to emphasize the fact that our Nationalism does not mean that we desire to establish barriers between ourselves and other nations. Far from it. Our desire is to bridge the gulf which has been created through an abnormal life. In a renewed and liberated Eretz Yisrael, where the selfish barriers between man and man no longer exist, we hope to realize the ideals of the Prophets of Israel, which are the ideals of our Modern Jewish poets and thinkers, and also those of our eminent guest, Dr. Tagore.

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## V.

### The Message of an Indian.

By D. J. Irani.

*(Translation of an Article in the Giornale d'Italia).*

I am proud of my India of to-day. I am proud because of the two supermen we possess, each with a distinct message not only for our country, but for the world, for humanity at large. The one is Mahatma Gandhi, the apostle of non-violence; and the other is the Poet Tagore, the apostle who wants the nations of the East and the West to study their mutual cultures, and by the mutual understanding and good will, proceeding from this intellectual contact, to strengthen more surely the bonds of international friendship and amity.

World-peace and human brotherhood can be the only ideals towards which the coming civilisation can rightly move. But these are mere catch phrases at present, and by themselves will prove useless to humanity in

the future,—as the teachings of the great Prince of Peace, have proved to the nations professing His religion.

Imagine, my friends, what we Orientals can think about you, nations of the West! Christ died on the cross, with the message of love on his lips; and the Christian nations, after they have had nearly two thousand years to assimilate His teachings of love and peace, run at each other's throats like a pack of wolves. And lo! when hundreds of thousands are killed or maimed in battle, and millions are widowed and orphaned, bells are rung in the churches, by whichever side claims temporary victory, to proclaim this horrible fact!

None can deny that this has been the result of narrow nationalism. Patriotism is undoubtedly a virtue, but within its proper limits; every virtue carried to excess is a vice. And the West to-day is sick and ailing, because all its nations have for their motto "my country, right or wrong", because all of them believe that Might is Right.

For this universal ailment, India is offering to the world, as it were, two physicians, Tagore and Gandhi. They do not claim to come with any new message. They interpret, once again to all, the spirit of the ancient scriptures of the East. To us, Truth and Right, the **Asha** of the Zoroastrians, and the **Rita** of the Upanishads, stand above the wants and interests of community or country.

And I am an optimist. The coming world **will** yearn and work for world-peace and human brotherhood. And what better armaments can it then have than the creed of non-violence of Mahatma Gandhi? What better means can it have, for the fostering of mutual respect and understanding amongst its members of different races and religions, than the opportunity to meet intellectually and study the cultures of each other, assimilate what is best in all, and then lay the foundation of an intellectual league of nations? That is the ideal of Visva-bharati, Poet Tagore's International University, at Santiniketan, in India.

In the development of this idea, rendered so feasible by the increase of means of rapid communication between all countries; in dotting the world over with centres of study of international cultures, like the Visva-bharati; lies the hope for the world's redemption, the hope for realisation of the immortal truth: "The Fatherhood of God, and brotherhood of men."

# VISVA-BHARATI

## MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION

### Objects

"To study the basis of life or the realisation of different aspects of truth from diverse points of view."

"To bring into more intimate relation with one another, through patient study and research, the different cultures of the East on the basis of their underlying unity."

"To approach the West from the viewpoint of such a unity of the life and thought of Asia."

"To seek to realise in a common fellowship of study the meeting of the East and the West, and thus ultimately to strengthen the fundamental conditions of world peace through the establishment of free communication of ideas between the two hemispheres."

"And with such ideals in view to provide at Santiniketan aforesaid a centre of Culture where research into and study of the religion, literature, history, science, and art of Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Islamic, Sikh, Christian, and other civilisations may be pursued along with the culture of the West, with that simplicity in externals which is necessary for true spiritual realisation, in amity, good fellowship and cooperation between the thinkers and scholars of both Eastern and Western countries, free from all antagonisms of race, nationality, creed or caste, and in the name of the One Supreme Being who is Shantam, Shivam, Advaitam."

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"The membership of the Visva-bharati and of its Constituent Bodies shall be open to all persons irrespective of sex, nationality, race, creed, caste, or class and no test or condition shall be imposed as to religious belief or profession in admitting or appointing members, students, teachers, workers, or in any other connection whatsoever."

The Society is at present maintaining the following institutions—Patha-Bhavan (School), Shiksha-Bhavan (College), Vidya-Bhavan (Research Institute), Kala-Bhavan (School of Arts and Crafts) at Santiniketan, Institute of Rural Reconstruction at Surul and Visva-Bharati Sammilani at Calcutta and Dacca. The Society manages its own press and publishing department.

The supreme council is vested in the Parishat. The Sadasyas (members) in General Meeting assembled. The Governing Body is the Samsad, consisting of members elected by the Sadasyas and the representatives of the different departments.

The membership fee Rs. 50. Annual subscription for ordinary members Rs. 10.

Persons desiring to become members of Visva-bharati should fill up a Form of application and send it to the Visva-bharati office.

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# THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY



EDITOR  
SURENDRANATH TAGORE

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# THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

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## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

[*A Lecture delivered in Japan*].

By RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

When I was about to start for my tour in China and Japan, there was an enthusiastic meeting in Calcutta, where my countrymen came together to express their joy at my taking this journey to the great Eastern countries. I felt with a sense of delight that the consciousness of kinship was waxing stronger among our people and that its growth might lead to a great future for Asia.

My friends who came to wish me happy times on these shores, asked me also to convey to your country their feelings of love and respect for you. They also requested me to ask you to rise above circumstances, favourable or unfavourable, and to prove the dignity of Eastern mind. They are all waiting to see a great Renaissance in Asia through Japan, where life is at its floodtide, and they wish she would wake up to the great responsibility she has, not only to her own people, but to the great continent to which she belongs.

At the same time, they wanted me to offer to your people their heartfelt sympathy for the disaster which has so suddenly overtaken your country. I am sure that the calamities over which you have no hand came to prove your manhood, and are in themselves an opportunity. Disasters only become absolutely disastrous when we know not how to deal with them.

Now that I have come to Japan, I realise with what courage you have accepted your tribulation. I see no sign of despair in your faces; I see that you have within yourselves that indomitable

resourcefulness which will help you to make good the loss. I do not mean that they will merely make your position stronger even than before; but the fact that you are able to face misfortune of such an overwhelming nature in the right spirit, will gain for you greater prestige among other nations, and give you a firmer confidence in your own power.

All great civilisations are built upon numberless ruins,—the toppled down towers of victory and wealth. It is only human beings in this world of life who have found their greatness through the desperate urgings of unfavourable circumstances. Humanity has never been pampered, petted and spoilt by Nature, but rather respected by being given constant opportunity to overcome the obstacles of failures and losses. I believe that what has now happened to you, and has brought your gathered resources of years to the dust in a moment, will inspire you to make a better beginning for a more vigorous experiment. You will realise that the people's life, like a waterfall, finds its full force of movement through courageous leaps from peak to peak of new trials.

This earthquake has only been the cause of physical upset for you, but unfortunately, closely following this, you have also received lately a rude moral shock in your national relations with another people, and this has deeply hurt your people, even more than the former which was only physical, because it has come with deliberate purpose from human hands. And yet what I expect to see among your people at this time of crisis is the same dignity of calm and patient fortitude.

You are on your trial to-day. The eyes of all nations are upon you in this calamity. Great tribulations in our history should never fail to give us the occasion to bring out the best resources of our life, so as not only to reveal them to the outer world, but—and this is more valuable—to reveal them to ourselves. If to-day you can discover some hidden source of magnanimity with which to face the insult and injury, if you can keep the majesty of your mind unimpaired, then you will be happy, and future generations will be thankful to you.

You have discovered one thing, that this earthquake, though but physical, and therefore causing you only material loss, has yet a great similarity to the disturbance of your relations with a

western country; for, the latter is also external, having in it no acknowledgement of moral law. Any relationship which had a moral value, would have been stronger than before at this time of suffering. But your relationship, as it was, was precarious. Any little event would have proved its hollowness. This was inevitable because it was not based upon the comradeship of human hearts. It had for its basis a sense of mere expediency, that lacked the frankness of youth and had the calculating spirit of senility. It was a treacherously shifting base upon which you could never have built your best hopes.

It is unfortunate that such disillusionment always gives rise to our baser passions. We feel angry and vengeful and eager to retaliate. Only then it becomes a complete defeat. I know if this insult had been offered by you to any western country, there would have been furious outbreaks of violence, of Ku Klux Klanism, of atrocious lynching against your people, and even its scientists and scholars would have had no shame in repudiating the claims of science and scholarship in your country. But is it right that you should copy that? Is it right that you, along with your political defeat, should accept moral defeat? I hope that your people, through your spiritual generosity, through your true pride of civilisation and through that sense of hospitality, which has been your birthright for centuries, will exercise your mind that has been trained and gifted with a wonderful self-control.

I should deplore very deeply the appearance of any sign of decay in these great traits of character that you possess. This is the time when you can bring out of your store all the wealth of moral heroism that you have inherited from your forefathers. This is the time to put to shame those others who have treated you in this unchivalrous manner, showing that their profession of friendship was all the while waiting for your weak moment, shamelessly to contradict itself. I do not think that any symptom of political hysteria on your part, is at all seemly at this time, or in accordance with your national tradition.

If we find you indulging just now in vulgar boisterousness, we shall know that it is weakness, which you have borrowed through those importers of moral drugs from abroad. We have been schooled in the West, where they have become hypnotised

by the sight of open and public expressions of vengefulness, the modern version of the naked war-dance of the savage. I hope that you will be saved from this. Real suicide it would be, if you were to forget your own true character, and the fact that there is a kind of death far worse than physical death itself.

In the East, we have had the courage to have faith even in impossible ideals. You all know that it was a prophet of the East who could say : "Love your enemies". You know too of another prophet of the East who could say : "Conquer anger by non-anger and evil by goodness." There are those in the West, who have accepted these teachings in their churches and yet who feel extremely nervous when they are reminded of them, when they find that such teaching is commercially unprofitable and politically inconvenient. Some of our friends here, who have studied Indian History, will tell you how these ideals have been pursued and believed in, and how men went to extreme lengths of non-killing, of non-violence, and of non-anger.

You have perhaps also learnt from the newspapers how a prophet has arisen in India, who has likewise proclaimed that you have to conquer violence by non-violence. He speaks like a prophet of the East and insists that what has been translated into the Bible of the West must not only be pursued in the personal lives of individuals but must be given the best possible expression in our national lives.

Perhaps most of you will not accept this teaching,—you will not be able to apply it to your national life. I understand your misgivings and sympathise with you in your want of faith. But let us discuss this point.

There was a time when our lives were simpler, when the spirit of the people was hospitable. This spirit has been overcome by the spirit of the Nation, with its intense consciousness of self-interest concentrated in political organisation. Such an unlimited cultivation of over-consciousness of self by the whole people, must inevitably produce its harvest of suspicion, hatred and inhospitable exclusiveness. And therefore if you have been rudely treated by a nation, and abruptly hustled out whenever it has been safe for it to disclose its moral crudity, there is no cause for surprise. It is of no use to be angry either against the earth-

quake, or against such eruptions of moral catastrophe, which are inevitable when this phenomenon that we term the Nation is rampant.

To be just and fair, you have to acknowledge that you also have been unjust and grasping where your nation has had a safe opportunity to manifest its evil aspect. I have a deep love and respect for you as a people, but when as a nation you have your dealings with other nations you also can be deceptive, cruel and efficient in handling those methods in which the western nations show such mastery. You must not plume yourselves that when you are suffering from small-pox, your skin and temperature be have better than those of other people who have the same malady.

Let us consider how this demoniacal power of the Nation has arisen. The nature of the people depends for its manifestation upon its creative personality. It has religion, arts, literature, traditions of social responsibility and co-operation. Its wealth to maintain itself and power of defence are secondary; they are not the ultimate ends for the people. But the Nation manifests itself in its property. The people represent life, the nation materials; when they are in harmony, that is to say, when material possessions keep to their own limits and the creative life is unhampered in its spontaneous activity, then civilisation is hospitable and generous. This being the case in the olden times it was possible for India to find her home in the heart of China and Japan, and your administrators did not busy themselves to find out if some groups of idealists, freed from barriers of passport offices, were finding access to the heart of your country, instead of into its gaols with police spies at their heels.

But when material possessions become too vast for a people, or when in competition with others the desire for material wealth rouses its ambition, then all its time and mind are occupied with very little else. The man who is "millionaire" is dragged by the very weight of his millions to the path of the multitude of millions. Then he has no time for culture, or for the poetry of life; he strictly barricades himself against visitors, whom he cannot but suspect to be self-seekers, being selfish in his own out-look upon life. In other words he becomes professional, and the human in him is banished into the shade.



Since nature's storehouse of power and wealth has been opened by the help of science, some people who know how to take advantage of it have suddenly grown enormously rich and others are incited to follow their example. The people, who were human, who were creative and social in their self-expression, have become professional, enormously self-centred and anti-social in their tendency of mind. Material wealth and power, with their very bulk, have occupied the greater part of the space, time and mind, of the people, necessitating a tremendous expense of thought and resources for ensuring its safety.

Material possessions create the worst divisions in human society when they are disproportionately big and naturally unmindful of moral responsibility. Therefore the Nation, the presiding genius of the material department of the people, can not but be hard and exclusive. And in the modern age this department has become the most proudly domineering of all other manifestations of human society. It has made the craving for money universal and has given the name of Progress to the raising of the material standard of living.

We all know how those who are immoderately rich suffer from a sense of class-distinction; how money, which is a dead thing, acts as an impenetrable wall around their self-imprisonment. Within this dungeon of illusion, they are proud of their segregation. This process is going on not only with individuals, but with the prosperous nations. And it is just these prosperous nations which become most suspicious of idealism, which barricade their doors with spies, police and prohibitions in order to safeguard their citadel of wealth, where the human spirit languishes and where there is no touch of life.

Such nations are doomed and they carry the curse of God in their money bags. They will die in the very enclosures which they have built for themselves,—enclosures of wealth, of high walls of national distinction impenetrable for others. Yet these are the people who once professed faith in a man, and even accepted him to be their God; who said it was easier for a camel to pass through the needle's eye than for the rich to find access to the Kingdom of Heaven.

~~The~~ The Kingdom of Heaven is here on this earth. It is there,

where we realise our best relations with our fellow-beings where there is no mutual suspicion and misunderstanding. There is the Kingdom of Heaven, in the spirit of comradeship and love. Christ was right when he said that the path to such a Kingdom is closed for him who thinks more of his money than of his soul, more of his soul, more of his personal right than of his human responsibility. Now that the whole human world has surrendered itself to the lure of money and power, the severance of human relationship is everywhere becoming evident and the fight between classes is spreading wide.

If you must have peace, you will have to fight the spirit of this demon, the Nation. You may think it hopeless, but do you not realise that its first appearance was not so long ago, not more than two centuries; that it has not the sign of immortality upon it, that already it is tottering towards its downfall? You must know that if we cling to this sinking ship, we also shall be drowned.

Let me appeal to your imagination. If we could go back into the distant past, we would know of facts that are not in histories. We would know that groups of men grew into great peoples through overcoming a feeling of distrust and cultivating sympathy for each other. It was not at all easy; for our passions are individualistic, our selfishness immensely strong. And yet the impossible has been attained in some societies. A system of discipline has been established, the sentiments of sympathy cultivated and the ferocious savage has been tamed on a whole-sale scale. We must also know that those who went on indulging in their selfish isolation, perished.

Suppose that the idealists had been there in those days and that they had had the courage to speak to those who still believed in robbery and muscular brutality and to warn them that they would never form great nations, do you they think that they would have been listened to? They would promptly have been eaten up!

In the early history of life in this world, with its display of stupendous bodily bulk and strength, when puny man first appeared on this earth, could his final victory have been predicted by the logic of appearances? In the same manner, it is apparent-

ly unbelievable to-day that only those who can overcome the egoistic sense of nationalism, who can develop the understanding of sympathy that pierces through barriers of race differences, who have the enduring strength of meekness, will inherit the earth; and not those who are imagined to be born rulers of men.

Often have my western friends almost sneeringly said to me that we in the East have no faith in Democracy, and thereupon they have asserted the superiority of their own mind over ours. Not being combative, I did not want to argue the matter and contradict them in their deep-rooted illusion. I know that in our part of the world we have some people who, as being of noble descent, are considered aristocrats, and enjoy special rights. My western friends believe that they have no such anomalies in their part of the world.

Be that as it may, one thing they must admit, that because our aristocracy is restricted to a narrow circle, the rest of the people have the true democratic spirit, which is the spirit of the community. About one thing there can be no difference of opinion, that we never had an aristocracy of the whole people, like this monstrous aristocracy so proud of its European blood, which has no pity for others who are darker in colour, for those Asiatics and African who can be exploited with impunity, as the common people used to be exploited in France before the revolution broke out.

These monster aristocrats consider us to be plebeian, because we are of another continent. While loudly protesting their democracy, they extort false evidence from a make-believe science to prove their race superiority and their right to inherit the earth. These aristocrats of monstrous girth and open jaws are out to feast upon the life blood of peoples whom they have dubbed ignoble, who are expected to feel grateful for providing comfort to the Nordic race with their own extinction. They assert their race aristocracy, not merely through their home-made science, but through the coercion of darker continents to slavery by the shattering argument of bombs. To day, they are almost openly ready to drop their pretensions to moral culture; but nevertheless they cling to their two illusions, the one of the Nordic race, and the other of Democracy.

We, who do not profess democracy, acknowledge our human obligations and have faith in our code of honour. But are you also going to allow yourselves to be tempted by the contagion of this belief in your own hungry right of inborn superiority, bearing the false name of democracy? Leave the unreality of these professions; hold up to us something which is your very own and not mere imitation. Do you not see how this malady of imitation is rapidly spreading from shore to shore, from nation to nation? It has the same monotony of features, in its offices, barracks, dress and manners, its attitude of mind. Every people in this world is vying with its neighbour to copy it, because being non-living it is easy to copy indefinitely. It is a mask that can be precisely similar in its multiplication, not a face which has spontaneous variety of self-expression.

But the mask can easily smother the living individuality of the face. That is what is happening everywhere in the world, the monotony of the nation killing the individuality of the people. The stone pavement, which can be made in the same stereotyped plan everywhere, deprives the soil of its unique personality of flowers and harvest. Through this deadening influence, even your arts and crafts, all the delicate idioms of expression in your life and surroundings, are fast losing their own living character and stiffening into the standardised convention made in a foreign world. The Nation makes this mould, which may be useful; but we cannot afford to pay its cost with the inspiration of creative life, which is inherent in living peoples.

It is the people in the western countries, that have produced its literature, its art, its music and dance; it is the spirit of the people that spoke through the voice of the great dramatists and artists of Greece, through the voice of Dante, Shakespeare and Goethe; it is the soul of your people, which reigns in your homes, giving them a profound quiet of beauty, in the dignified self-control of your behaviour, in the combination of usefulness and grace in all things that you produce, in your inimitable paintings and dramatic performances.

But what are these products of the Nation,—the machinery of destruction and profit-making, the double dealings of diplomacy,—in the face of which moral obligation lies defeated and the spirit

of human brotherhood destroyed? You have been tempted, or perhaps almost compelled, to accept them; and we in India are envying you, ready for ourselves to accept as much of them as comes our way. The cruelty and meanness of lies and exaggeration and the greed of self-seeking are creeping up over that soil on which were born those great sages who preached *maitri* and self-emancipation.

Whenever the spirit of the Nation has come, it has destroyed sympathy and beauty, and driven out the generous obligations of human relationship from the hearts of men. It has spread the ugliness of its cities and its markets into the minds and enthroned the demon of deformity on the hearts of men. Though to-day it dominates the spirit of man everywhere in the world, it will die like the worm which dies in the heart of the fruit that it has devoured. It will die,—but unfortunately it may meanwhile destroy things of unrivalled worth, the products of centuries of self-control and spiritual training.

I have come to warn you in Japan, the country where I wrote my first lectures against Nationalism at a time when people laughed my ideas to scorn. They thought that I did not know the meaning of the word and accused me of having confused the word Nation with State. But I stuck to my conviction and now after the war, do you not hear everywhere the denunciation of this spirit of the nation, this collective egoism of the people, which is universally hardening their hearts?

I have come once again to remind you. I hope to be able to meet individuals in this country, who have the courage of faith needed to bring about a great future. Let Japan find her own true mind, which will not merely accept lessons from others, but will create a world of her own, which will be generous of its gifts to all humanity. Make all other peoples of Asia proud in their acknowledgement of your greatness, which is not based upon the enslavement of victims, upon the accumulation of material wealth exclusively for your own enjoyment,—wealth which is not accepted by man for all time and is rejected by God.

# THE BODY OF HUMANITY

By C. F. ANDREWS.

## I.

Ever since I was able to think seriously, it has appeared to me self-evident, that if the theory of physical evolution is true, and human life in this planet is the crown of creation, then it is impossible that the religious instinct in man can be a disorderly and chaotic factor in human life,—a mere rivalry of warring creeds. There must be an organic unity between those different creeds, which have persisted in human development,—a relation between them that is intimately spiritual. We can no longer think of each creed as a special creation. The genealogical tree of religion in man's long history has many branches, and these branches issue from a parent stem; they are not individual and distinct and cut off from one another, as we used to think of them in our pre-Darwinian days.

Such thoughts have been with me all through my conscious life of seeking after truth. The difficulty has been, to trace out the main directions in which the different branches of religion have grown, and also to relate them to the parent stem. I have come to one personal conclusion, which I have slowly made my own. Just as, amid the many names of those who dealt with the physical evolution of mankind, the name of Darwin stands first as a pioneer and discoverer, so in the realm of religious evolution, Raja Ram Mohan Roy's name will stand out greatest and highest of all.

What I am trying to describe in this article as a result of my own conscious experience in thought, owes its outline at least to the extraordinary stimulus which I received from my first reading of the English works of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. I would wish to acknowledge this, as a debt which is deeply due, before I go on. In what follows I have ventured to use some material from an unfinished essay, which I contributed to the *Modern*

Review more than ten years ago. I have, however, considerably revised some of my previous conclusions.

When we try, with all the accumulated knowledge of mankind which the last century has given us, to picture the human race past and present, we find that the two longest groups of human civilisation and culture spring ultimately from two great underlying religious movements in the East and West.

The former of these two movements had its centre in Northern India and passed thence to almost every part of Asia, except its Western corner, unifying for over two thousand years the further East. It goes by the name of Hinduism in India, and of Buddhism in other lands.

The second, which is called Christianity, had its original home in the Western corner of Asia, among a Semitic people, and therefrom passed over the whole of Europe and America unifying the West.

Between these two great areas of culture, stretches a great land barrier, as it were, which was occupied later in the day by a third supreme movement of religion, called Islam, dividing for the most part by its presence the two cultures, to the East and West of it, about which I have already spoken. The watersheds of Indian religion have on the whole been eastward. The watersheds of Christianity have been persistently westward. From time to time, the land barrier of Western Asia has been crossed; but more frequently, Islam itself has been modified and moulded by Christianity on its Western borders and by Hinduism on its Eastern frontier, and has coloured in turn with its own distinctive hue both these religions.

It might be of speculative interest to consider, what would have happened if Indian Buddhism had wholly pierced the land barrier westward before it was occupied by Islam; or if St. Paul's vast spiritual genius and personality had fully pierced it eastward. But for practical purposes such speculations are of little value. The course of human history has flowed steadily in other directions; and, if the theory of religious evolution is true, there must be some design and purpose in all such demarcations.

In making these wide generalisations, I have omitted two hitherto unsolved historical factors. The former is the important

question how far the Hindu-Buddhist impulse did actually penetrate the West before the birth of Christ. The second is the problem of Nestorian Christianity. New evidence is coming to light, every day, that this Eastern presentation of the Christian Faith may have affected Mahayana Buddhism and have left much fertilising silt behind, as it flooded forward as far as China in the Seventh and Eighth centuries after Christ. But neither of these two questions affects the actual grouping of religions, which we find in the world to day.

A fourth group, comprising the animistic tribes of Africa, Polynesia, South America, and certain parts of Asia, need not delay us. For there is every sign, that the whole area of the world's population will rapidly be absorbed into one or other of the religions already mentioned. In Africa, for instance, Islam is likely to go on expanding from the North towards the Centre; while Christianity is spreading with equal rapidity from the South and around the Central Lakes. There would appear to be no likelihood, at this later stage of history, of the birth of a new religion in these regions of undeveloped humanity.

## II.

When we examine the two larger groups of mankind,—leaving aside for the moment the Islamic area,—we find that there is one striking resemblance in their primitive history. Secular civilisation of a material type, has been penetrated at last by religion owing to the birth of a supremely spiritual personality. With regard to India, we are slowly coming to understand how far advanced in art and wealth and commerce the ancient Dravidian Civilisation actually was, before the Aryan invasion took place. The Aryans did not find merely savage peoples to conquer. There was a background of culture already there. But the religious work of the Aryans was so creative and productive, that Dravidian India was not only converted, it became in turn singularly rich in religious thought and gave the true direction of each new advance of Hinduism during the early Middle Ages. Thus India has kept permanently religions.

Another unsolved problem of history, which I can only show in passing, is to find out how far the Dravidian secular system



contained in itself the seeds of religion and thus helped originally to make the Aryan development progressive. Certain speculations have recently swung the pendulum of our historical imagination that way, bidding us revise our facts concerning the debt of the Dravidians to the Aryan invaders.

In China, the penetration of the original secular civilisation by the Aryan religion was never so complete as in India itself. The Confucian ethics had already so deeply impressed Chinese life as a whole, that the Buddhist movement from India became almost absorbed into this strong ethical culture. Nevertheless Okakura's picture of a Buddha land, which reached from Bactria to the shores of the Pacific Ocean, is in the main a true one. The religious spirit of India, transplanted to China, Japan and the Malay Peninsula, has left its deep mark upon all these countries. It has produced many of those same qualities, in the peoples of the Far East, that we find in India itself, and has given to the whole group of Eastern peoples an unmistakable spiritual distinction.

The power of this religious atmosphere to transform character may be measured from the fact, that all the barbarian invasions of fierce and savage races into India and China have never been able to subdue this inner spirit of religious peace and calm or to force back these countries into barbarism. If there is a spiritual atmosphere of the East, peculiarly its own, it is due principally to the effect of this unifying Aryan religion, which radiated from India.

Turning to the West, we find the same permeation of secular civilisation by creative religion. Here, in the West, the Aryan invaders found a civilisation, already in possession, even more highly developed than that of the Dravidians in India. With its home originally in Egypt, and its centre, later on, in Crete, it mingled with the other civilisations of the world in Mesopotamia and Phoenicia, and reproduced their art and luxury. But it seems to have lacked that spiritual idealism, which might have served to make it a beacon light for humanity.

That light was first kindled in Europe by the intermingling of the young Aryan invaders with the older inhabitants. This cross fertilisation issued in the intellectual glory of Greece. But

it was from a Semetic source,—in the tiny corner of Western Asia called Judea,—that came, along with a supreme spiritual personality, the genial religious impulse which we call Christianity.

Few problems have been more difficult to solve than the origins of this religion. That these were not solely Semetic, appears now to be quite certain. But two questions remain unsolved: (i) How far the Hindu-Buddhist influences had reached Palestine, in such a way as to give seed thoughts to the new religious cult; (ii) How far the Greek mind had penetrated the Christian religious development from its very first inception. What is ascertained is this, that a spiritual force of immense potency had suddenly appeared in the history of the human race, which was only comparable with the Buddhist impulse from India. Those who have read through H. G. Wells's 'Outline of History' are aware, how these two creative Epochs, the Christian and the Buddhist, are the two pivots on which the whole history of the human race turns.

In the subsequent centuries of the West, the Christian light has more than once been nearly extinguished altogether. From the eighth to the twelfth centuries in Europe, barbarism had reigned almost supreme. But during the Middle Ages, a revival of pure religion passed over the whole of the West. A second revival came with the Reformation; then the Modern Age began. Meanwhile Christianity itself had crossed the Atlantic and powerfully affected the growth of the young civilisation that had sprung up in North America. The Quakers and the Puritans of Pennsylvania and New England set the type.

When we try to review this process in order to consider the spiritual atmosphere produced in the West, we must allow for certain factors, as in the case of China, which stand apart from religion altogether and may be traced to purely secular causes. The chief of these, perhaps, is that strong aggressive energy which has been derived partly from the old Roman tradition and partly from Teutonic sources. Christianity has used this and modified it, but has never completely assimilated and transformed it, or overcome its harshness, except in individuals.

## III.

With the ground work thus mapped out, we may now go on to consider how far the corporate ideal of humanity has been advanced and how far it has been retarded.

Turning first to India and China, which comprise nearly half the human race, we find in certain directions a very strong cohesive tendency at work. It is a strange historical blindness which fails to see the inner unity of the Indian peoples,—a unity all the more striking because of the multiplicity of races and languages, of local and tribal customs.

It is a unity almost entirely dependent on a spiritual atmosphere, hard to define but omnipresent. A bewildering variety of religious emotions, age after age, has gone to produce it: the continuous tradition of the Brahmin priesthood has influenced it, for good and ill alike. But deeper than this, there seems to be something equivalent to a religious attachment to the very soil itself; a sense of the *GENIUS LOCI*, on a transcendent scale; a devotion which makes every mountain and river sacred, and unites with this sanctity the very animals as integral with mankind. This religious attachment is bound up with the thought of God as immanent in the universe and in man. It is not in any way the product of the schools, but closely akin to Nature, and found most strongly developed in those who are nearest to Nature,—the villagers, the peasants.

This sense of unity, this religious spirit, which finds God's immanence everywhere, has gradually produced its own atmosphere and made the land of India like no other region on Earth. Alien races have entered India, and fallen under its spell. Alien religions have come in, and felt a subtle change pass over them. India has always been and always must be essentially a country of religion, because religion is in the very air that India breathes.

When the social effect of this remarkable religious development is looked for, the first impression is one of disappointment. For the immense stratification of society caused by the caste system, with the 'untouchable' problem behind it, has rendered Hindu life in certain respects highly artificial, and, in the cult

of untouchability, inhuman. The self-contained village system next attracts attention, owing to its persistence through all the changes of history; but while it has a simplicity and beauty of its own, which it would be vandalism to destroy, yet in its present form it has shown singularly little adaptability, or progressive assimilation.

It is when we come to the inner circle of the family, that we reach the true secret of India's greatness and find the highest mark of spiritual influence. This lies in the ideal of the true life, so intimately bound up at every point with religion, and the reverence of man for womanhood as the 'mother', with its counterpart of wifely devotion, giving the profoundest unity of all. Marriage, in India, has become a sacrament of renunciation. The womanhood of India, more than anything else, has kept this sacramental view of life whole and undefiled. By the Hindu woman's utter and absolute self-devotion, going even to the extravagant lengths of *Sati*, she has maintained religious idealism secure, and set forth an infinite and unbounded sacrifice before the eyes of men. Thus man, in his turn, has been drawn away from the world to the religious life, and has found in his old age no satisfaction except in the Eternal.

In China, the close cohesion of the population has been reached by a different process; yet in the family life is to be found, even as in India, the secret of its permanence and stability,—the true basis of a lasting civilisation, that has somehow escaped the poison germs of senile decay. In comparison with the Indian conception, we note in China this new and striking fact, that the centre of devotion, and of the same type of extravagant sacrifice, lies not so much in the wife, as in the children, who are ready to yield life itself on behalf of the parents. This fact has made the idealism of China more ethical, sober and practical, and less mystically religious than that of India.

The filial love of China is based on noble ethical law and custom, finding a response in the human heart. But the love of wife and mother in India had its origin in religion, and has therefore maintained throughout its essentially mystical and sacramental basis. Thus the love of the son and the daughter for the parents in China has not brought with it quite the same sense

of the Infinite which Indian religion has always possessed. Yet there can be no question, that the ancestor worship of the Chinese, and the filial devotion connected with it, have a close relation to India, and their growth through many centuries has made a worthy contribution to the Body of Humanity.

When we turn away from India and China to the West, we find a strongly different picture. At first sight, here again, the outward effects of Christianity,—with its high spiritual teaching unattained and unattainable,—are disappointing. There has been, on one side, the immoderate haste to increase material riches at the expense of others, which has led to the exploitation of alien races and the growth of an inhuman colour prejudice; while, on the other side, there has grown up a complicated system of aggressive and pugnacious national units, which, like the caste system in India, have outgrown their proper use and become a menace to mankind.

But along with this negative and destructive side, there has also been a positive contribution of good, which represents the great constructive achievement of Europe. This finds its centre most truly in the ideal of individual freedom and personality, often grossly caricatured and misrepresented, but still our ever abiding and increasing possession which the Body of Humanity may claim for its own.

This ideal of freedom may have already existed in Europe in pre-Christian times. It underlies, in a certain measure, both Greek and Roman History; and it gained fresh strength from the Teutonic races. But Lord Acton has shown, in his famous lectures entitled 'The History of Freedom', how Christianity imparted to the ideal of freedom its own peculiar spiritual power and made it current coin for mankind as a whole to use.

A further phase of the same ideal of freedom and personality is represented by the mingling of the spiritual hope in the future of mankind with the experimental knowledge of modern science. Science received at last in Europe, after many struggles and persecutions, the mental background of aspiration which it needed in order to make its great advance. The development of practical philanthropy has gone forward hand in hand with it.

This united advance has cleared away already many of the foul diseases which were festering in the Body of Humanity. It has made directly for soundness and sanity and health. It has led, in modern times, to the emancipation of the slave, the mitigation of human suffering, together with the reduction of cruelty both towards man and beast. What was foreshadowed in early Buddhist times, more than twenty centuries ago, and practised all over the East, has now been taken up into a world-wide religious movement of humanitarian sympathy coextensive with all the races of living creatures both animal and human.

The New World of North America was early freed, by fortunate circumstances, from the aggressive nationalisms of Europe, with their petty local frontiers and armed customs barriers bristling like prickly hedges, dividing mankind into fenced compartments. The disruptive tendencies of the Old World have been overcome in a considerable measure in the New; and there has been a great cohesive tendency binding the different states and provinces together. Furthermore, a vast immigrant population from the poorest classes of Europe—Poles, Italians, Russians, Irish,—has been absorbed and assimilated.

On the other hand, the Negro problems in North America, and other allied 'colour' questions, still remain unsolved. The signs are ominous and full of portent for the future. The recent ruthless Asiatic Exclusion Law has dealt a serious wound at the Body of Humanity, which will be extremely hard to heal.

Yet in spite of these portentous and alarming features, there is a youthful vigour and a freedom from past impediments about the peoples of the New World, which may enable them both to make their peace betimes with Asia, and also overcome the separatist evils which have so often defeated Europe and Asia alike. The younger member of the human family has not yet, however, the right to take the lead. That right, if prematurely given, might only spell disaster to mankind.

In the second part of this Essay, I shall discuss what contribution the Islamic Civilisation is likely to make to the Body of Humanity, and also examine the possibilities of the immediate future, when intimate intercourse becomes still further developed among the peoples of mankind.

**WHEN ALL MY DOORS ARE OPEN.**

*By* RABINDRANATH.

Once when we were both together, Spring came to our cottage,  
    "Let me in," he cried.  
He had brought for us the whispered secrets of his gladness,  
    Lyrics of new leaves.  
I was busy with my fancies, you sat at your spinning,  
    He went back unheeded.  
Suddenly we started when we saw his parting shadow  
    And his remnant roses.

Now, you are away, beloved, Spring comes to our cottage,  
    "Let me in," he cries.  
He has brought for me the fitful shiver of the shadows,  
    Doves' despondent cooings.  
I sit idle at the window, and a phantom spinning  
    Spins to me sad dreams,  
Now that Spring has for his gift the gift of secret sorrow  
    All my doors are open.

## A JAPANESE VIEW OF MODERN ART

By OKAKURA KAKUZO.

This essay is a confession—hence an appeal; an appeal, therefore a protest. And protests are apt to be wearisome. It concerns itself chiefly with the problems of modern art as seen from a Japanese point of view. Remember, however, that my criticisms are not dictated by any want of respect for Western art, compelling as it does, in all its phases, the unconscious homage of wonder, if not always of admiration. Our reverential attitude toward any true expressions of art can be traced to our time-honoured axiom, that a picture should be approached as one would enter the presence of a great prince. We have been taught to prostrate ourselves even to a vase of flowers before examining the beauty of its arrangement.

In the first place, I wish to distinguish between the problems which concern the individual painter and those which concern society. In our Eastern conception of art, questions of technique belong to the painter himself. The public has no right to determine what it shall be, in the present or in the future. The individuality of the artistic effort forbids that an outsider should meddle in its methods. The painter himself is but half cognizant of the secret which makes him a master, for each new idea imposes its own modes and laws. The moment when he formulates his secrets is the moment when he enters on his old age and death.

For beauty is the joy of the eternal youthfulness of the creative mind. And it is the sharing the gladness of the artist in his discovery of a re-awakened life in the universe that constitutes the love of art to us. One of our monk-painters of the Ashikaga period in the fourteenth century claims that art is as the *samadhi* of the playfulness of the human soul. *Samadhi*, as you know, is the term for supreme realization in Indian speech. Indeed, it is the magnificent innocence of the playful genius which is too selfish to be exclusive, that makes all great Art so unapproachable and so inviting to all.



The common weakness of humanity is to offer advice when it is not asked. Society has been ever ready to invade the sanctuary of Art. Patronage, with its accustomed superciliousness, has often imposed its authority on a realm which gold could not reach. Public criticism, with the best intentions in the world, has made itself only ridiculous by trying to interfere in questions where the painter must be the sole judge. Why enchain the vital spirit of Art? It is evanescent and always alive, and is godlike in its transformations. Was it not a Greek who said that he defined certain limits in Art by what he had done? The Napoleonic geniuses of the brush are constantly winning victories, mindless of the dogmatic strategy of the academicians. The foremost critic of modern England has been ironically censured for his undue depreciation of Whistler, as one who was to be remembered by what he failed to understand. The fate of æsthetic discussions is, to hand on the Achillean heels of Art, and therein to find the vulnerable point of attack. We can Ruskinize only on the past.

If I may stretch a point, the masters themselves may be said to be responsible for allowing society to frustrate the spontaneous play of later artists. Their personality has been so great as to leave a lasting impression on the canons of beauty, and any deviation from the accepted notions is certain to be regarded with suspicion. Society has been taken into the confidence of Art, and, like all confidences, it has been either too little or too much. The world has become disrespectful toward Art on account of the proffered familiarity. It feels at liberty to dictate where it ought to worship, to criticize where it ought to comprehend. It is not that the public should not talk, but that it should know better. It is not that society should not be amused, but that it should enjoy more. We are sorry to realize how much of real æsthetic sympathy is lost in the jargon of studio-talks.

The very individuality of Art, which makes its problem so subjective to the artist, at the same time makes it defy classification in time. It is a matter of doubt whether we can speak of the "modern problems" in painting as such, with any degree of accuracy or with profit. The problem which confronts the painter to-day has been always with him, since the days he first

traced the mastodon on bone fragments, in the primeval dens of the cave-lions.

In this age of classification we often forget that the eternal flow of life joins us with our predecessors. Classification is, after all, a convenience to arrange our thoughts, and, like all objects of convenience, becomes in the end troublesome. The modern scientific mind is apt to consider itself to have conquered matter by simply labelling it. But definitions are limitations, and thus barriers to our insight. A seventeenth-century Japanese poet has written that we feel the coldness of things on our lips, like a blast of autumn, whenever we begin to speak. Lao-tsze, in his supreme adoration of the Unspeakable, has pointed out that the reality of a house is not in the roof or the walls, but in the spaces which they create. So the reality of painting consists in its innate beauty, not in the names of the schools or periods in which we love to arrange it on the shelves of our historical consciousness.

It has been said that Romanticism is the distinctive characteristic of modern art. But which of the so-called classic masters has not been romantic? If the term means individualism, the expression of the self instead of impersonal ideals, it must be the common property, nay, the very essence of all creative efforts. If the term means the emotional side of the art-impulse in contradistinction to the intellectual, or the sensuous, which respectively represent the classic or the realistic, it is again a name for Art itself, because Art is emotion. A painting is the whole man, with his infinite susceptibilities to the thoughts of other men and the nature around him. It is his essay on the world, whether it be a protest or an acquiescence. Delacroix has been considered the acme of modern Romanticism. But do we not see in him the all-roundness of a great artistic mind? He is an artist. He is a Delacroix.

Again, people are wont to claim that Realism is the insignia of modern painting. There is no realism in Art in the strict sense of the word, for Art is a suggestion through Nature, not a presentation of Nature itself. We may notice that a vast amount of conventionality exists even in the French Impressionists who are said to have uttered the last word of Realism. Their best productions command respect, not on account of their power of

painting sunlight, but in the value of the new poetry they are enabled to express through their outdoor technique. Am I correctly informed that it was found in Titian? Certainly in Michel-angelo!

Although the development of painting in different countries has created different methods of approaching nature, the original relation to it has never been broken. For nature is a part of Art as the body is a part of the soul. A Sung writer has called attention to the interrelation by the remark that one admires a landscape for being like a picture, and a picture because it is like a real landscape. Art is no less an interpretation of nature than nature is a commentary on Art. The types of physical beauty in man or woman, which have been the source of inspiration to great masters, are in their turn determined by the ideal which they set for the succeeding generations. The waves have become Korin to us, as shadows have grown to be Rembrandt to you.

I do not know if I have made my meaning clear. I have been trying to say that the problems of the painter are individual and subjective, that the method of expressing his personality lies entirely with each artist and forbids any interference from the outside. I hope that I have conveyed to you the idea that the questions which we may discuss profitably regarding painting are not, whether it shall be more idealistic or less realistic, whether the artist should create in this scheme of colour, or that tone of light. These belong to the painter exclusively, and he is well able to take care of himself.

Then what is the objective side of the question? What are the modern problems of painting which society can fitly discuss at all? I reply that it is the relation of painting to Society itself. Society regulates the conditions under which Art is produced. If it cannot claim the artist, it can claim the man. If it cannot dictate his technique, it can furnish his theme, and to a certain extent his ideals. It is in the secret understanding between the performer and the audience that both delight. It is the humanity that reverberates alike through the chord of Art and the hearts of the people. The more human the call, the more universal and deeper the response.

Nothing touches us more than the weary lines on a great painter's face, for they are the traces, not of his contact with his art, but with the world. One is a joy and a solace, the other is an eternal torment. The antagonism between the two lies in the laws of their existence. Art is the sphere of freedom, Society that of conventions. The vulgar ever resent the ideal, Society is somehow always afraid of the living artist. It begins to offer applause when his ears are deaf,—flowers when he is safely laid in his grave. The success and popularity of a living painter in many cases are signs of lowness of spiritual level. For the higher the artistic mind soars, the greater becomes the possibility of local or contemporary miscomprehension. Even in the perfection of Raphael, or in the princely case of Rubens, we are tempted to miss the sublimity of the tormented soul of Michelangelo.

Society has not only been inimical to individual masters, but has at times indulged in the wholesale destruction of schools. Eastern Art had also its ample measure of such catastrophes. To give an example: the conquest of China by the Mongols in the thirteenth century brought about a sudden downfall of Celestial Art from which it has never since been able to recover.

As you are doubtless aware, the time at which this calamity occurred was the brightest age of Chinese painting. It was in the Sung dynasty, so rich in poetical and philosophical inspirations. It was the age when Confucianism had evolved a new meaning by the synthesis of Taoist and Buddhist ideals. It was the age when China was breaking through the crust of her ancient formalism, when political and economical experiments were tried on a vast scale. You will remember that the wonderful porcelain of China was the special product of this period of universal activity.

Painting was the art of the Sung people. It is to their masters that the later Chinese, and we Japanese, owe the higher conception of the quality of the line, or the manipulation of light and atmosphere within the condensed area of black and white treatment. Before them Chinese painting was beautiful in its repose, with the stately completeness of the style which we see in the remains of early Indian or Greco-Roman painting. The Sung artists emancipated Asiatic art from this classicism to turn

its gaze on the poetry of movement and seek new meanings of life in the intimate aspects of nature.

Alas! all these brilliant achievements of the Sung "illumination" were stopped in their full career by the advent of the Mongol conquerors. Their barbarous rule crushed the vitality of the native civilization, and painting had barely a chance to survive. Thenceforward it is a decadence relieved here and there by a few exceptional geniuses. It was not the Mongols alone who inflicted such disaster on Chinese art. The Manchus came again from the North to impose another alien government. Wars and disturbances never ceased to harass the Celestial painter. What one regards to-day as representative of Chinese art is but a dismal shadow compared with what it was in the glorious age of the Tang or Sung masters.

The calamities imposed upon Art by the social conditions do not end here. Even in the days of peace we shall find that the so-called encouragement was by no means a boon to Art. The self-complacency of Society is apt to make itself believe that patronage is everything. On the contrary, the word "patronage" is in itself an insult. We want sympathy, not condescension. If Society really cared for good Art it would approach it with the respect due to all the noble functions of life. As it is, painting has been often called to the degrading service of Society. It was this that made the great Tang painter Yenrippen tell his children that he would disown them if they ever learned to paint.

Religion has been supposed to be the greatest inspiration of Art. It is often claimed that the loss of religions zeal caused the decadence of Art. But Art is a religion in itself. The mere fact of painting a holy subject does not constitute the holiness of the picture. The inherent nobleness and devotional attitude of the artist's mind towards the universe, alone stamp him as the religious painter. It has been remarked that in the picture of the bamboo by Sankoku lay the whole mystery of Taoism. The stereotyped representations of Christian or Buddhist subjects, of which, alas! there are so many, are not only a parody on religion, but a caricature of Art itself. Here we see another instance of the effects of misplaced patronage where even Religion made a

hand-maiden of Art, and thus robbed it of its legitimate expression.

Society, in posing as the patron, forgets that its true function is that of the mother. Art was rarely allowed a place to nestle on its bosom. The waywardness of Art born of her innate individuality has caused her to be treated as a step-child. The palmy days of painting were only when the painters had a recognized place in the social scheme. In old times painting was either a trade or an occupation of the religious. The great masters belonged to the guild if not to the cloister. They were Bellinis or Fra Angelicos.

It must not be inferred that the conditions in the past which gave to both the Italian and the Japanese painters a recognized place in society, are to be considered ideal or perfect. I am simply pointing to the fact that the position of Art was not anomalous, at least not as it is nowadays. The difficulty at the present time is that Society has broken the ancient harmony, and offers nothing to replace it. The Academy and the Institute are poor substitutes for the Medieval guilds or the Japanese monkhood—the groups which kept up the traditions and furnished a home for Art.

The modern spirit, in emancipating the man exiles the artist. The painter of to-day has no recognized function in the social scheme. He may be nearer nature, but is farther from humanity. Have we not noticed how intensely human are the pictures of all the great masters? Do we not notice how distant and cold are the modern productions? Art for Art's sake is a wail of Bohemia.

If we look on the surface of things, it would appear as if there were no time in history when Art was so honoured as it is to-day in Europe or America. The highest social distinctions are conferred on the successful painter and the amount of his remuneration is incomparably greater than that given the old master. Yet it is a matter of doubt whether he enjoys the fostering care and the stimulating influences which the community and brother-workers accorded him in the past. The very lack of finish and refinement in their work shows the difference between the new and the old. It is significant that in France where the

relation between the artist and the community is better kept than elsewhere in the West, where traditions are still adhered to by its Institute, we find the most vital of contemporary achievements.

We of the East often wonder whether the West cares for Art. The desire seems to be not for Art, but for decorations,—decoration in the sense of subjugating beauty for the sake of display. In the rush for wealth there is no time for lingering before a picture. In the competition of luxury, the criterion is not that the thing should be more interesting, but that it should be more expensive. The paintings that cover the walls are not of your choice, but those dictated by fashion. What sympathy can you expect from Art when you offer none? Under such conditions Art is apt to recoil either with insidious flattery or with brutal sarcasm. Meanwhile the true Art weeps. Do not let my expressions offend you. Japan is eager to follow in your footsteps, and is fast learning not to care for Art.

The task of preserving Japanese painting against all these antagonistic influences is not easy. It is a matter of no small wonder that there has been produced within recent years a new school of national painting. Our hope for the future lies in the tenacity of the Japanese race, which has kept its individuality intact since the dawn of its history. Two generations cannot change the idiosyncrasies of twenty centuries. The bulk of the traditions still remains practically unharmed.

Of late years there has been a marked tendency to a deeper recognition of the best in the ancient culture of Japan. We are glad to see in the heroic sacrifices of our people in the war that the spirit of old Japan is not dead. Our greatest hope is in the very vitality of Art itself, which enabled it to thrive in spite of the various adversities which it encountered in the past. A grim pride animates us infacing the enormous odds which modern society has raised against us. At the present day we feel ourselves to be the sole guardians of the art inheritance of Asia. The battle must be fought out to the very last.

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# DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT AMONG THE INDO-ARYANS

By PROF. STEN KONOW.

*Introductory Remarks.*

About a hundred years ago, in the year 1820, Ram Mohan Roy published his *Precepts of Jesus*, a highly interesting work which exercised a not inconsiderable influence. It dealt with the leading ideas underlying Christianity, and dealt with them in a way which showed that its author was filled with sympathy for the tenets of the religion of Europe.

One would have thought that his enterprise had been hailed with enthusiasm by European priests and clergymen. Such was not however the case. The learned doctors of divinity were rather displeased. They did not think that Ram Mohan dealt with Christianity in the proper way : his view was not the orthodox one ; and orthodoxy has often, in most countries, been considered as a necessary condition for being entitled to discuss religious matters.

In these lectures I am going to do just the opposite of what your illustrious compatriot did a hundred years ago, and I am venturing to do so without his deep penetration and intimate understanding of religious mentality. It would therefore be quite natural if some of you might think that my undertaking is a preposterous one and ask what qualifications I, a European, have for speaking to you about matters which are dear to your heart, and which you must be presumed to understand much better than I. I know that I run a grave risk, but still I take the risk, and I shall try to tell you why.

Since I was a boy in the Norwegian University I have devoted most of my time to the study of Indian History and Indian civilisation, and I have learnt to love India and to consider her as my sacred home. I have tried to follow the development of Indian thought and Indian religions during the centuries, and I willingly confess that it has seemed to me to be almost impossible



for a European to grasp the Indian mind behind all the different stages of that development. There appeared to be such a fundamental difference between many of the different forms which religion has taken in this vast country, that one might sometimes be inclined to doubt that it was the same mind which manifested itself in all of them.

In the hymns of the Rigveda we see a stormy, warlike people praising mighty heavenly gods and coveting their favour through sacrifice, well knowing nevertheless that the celestial kings had the power of blessing as well as of withholding their favour, in spite of hymns and sacrifice. Then, in the Brahmanas, we seem to be met with quite a different mentality : the sacrifice, the *yajña*, is all-powerful, and the great gods appear to have been reduced to mere puppets in the great drama, where the chief actors are the priests who know all the details of the complicated ritual. And again in the Upanishads, the knowledge, the deep insight itself, appears as the cosmic power ruling and framing the universe and leading man on to eternity.

Then follow, as a natural consequence of such a frame of mind, religions like Jainism and Buddhism, where it is pointed out that the way to bliss leads away from the multifarious life in which the Vedic Arvan rejoiced, away from the sacrifice which was so highly praised in the Brahmanas, through the abnegation of the I to realisation of eternal truth. And again, apparently in direct opposition to this view, we find the Bhāgavatas, with their belief in a merciful personal God, who only asks man to meet Him in devotional love, and then draws him into His eternal heaven of bliss.

It would seem as if these different views cannot be reconciled, as if there were, within Indian religions, several different layers without any internal connection between them.

But an old Rishi has told us that such is not the case :

*Eternal truth is one, but it is reflected in many ways in the minds of the singers.*

He says this about his own time. He saw the differences, but he also saw the unity ; and he leads us to think that where we seem to see nothing but various tenets and beliefs, there may yet

be a uniting bond, an eternal reality, of which we only perceive the varying formulas.

It has gradually dawned upon me that the old Rishi was right, and that his saying has a wider application, which takes us outside of India, and is valid at least for all the Indo-European nations and peoples, who are descended from the same ancestors but who have carved out their destinies in different circumstances and in different ways.

It really seems to me that such is the case, that the case of religious thought is fundamentally the same in India and in ancient Europe, so that the apparent divergences are in fact nothing more than secondary accretions. I even think that this primitive base, which takes us back to the times when we were all savages, may at the present day be made the foundation of a religious belief, which will satisfy modern man, in new and purer forms, adapted to the requirements of the modern age, but still with the old stamp which has survived the changes of the ages.

He who is standing in the midst of a great wood, does not see the wood but only the trees. But from a distance the wood itself appears as a definite whole. And similarly, he who has grown up in the tenets of a definite religion, has some difficulty in realizing, as the ancient Rishi realized, that there is one eternal truth behind all religions. The historical scholar is in a better position, and he who follows him will perhaps acquire a deeper understanding of his own religion than if he does not look outside its frame. And he will become more devoted to his own faith when he sees that the same deep underground is to be found also outside. For he will then be thoroughly convinced that it must be of universal validity, an eternal truth.

That is my reason for venturing to speak to you about Indian religions. I have come to you not as a critic, but as a fellow worker in the search for eternal truth, in the hope that some of the results of my own studies may help you to find the way to your own hearts.

I know that the best thing would be to examine all the religions of the world. But it would be impossible to do so in a single series of lectures, and besides, no living scholar would be able to do so satisfactorily. Even to try to lay open the

fundamental conceptions of the Indo-European peoples would lead us too far. I have therefore chosen to limit myself to a historical review of the religions of Aryan India, with occasional remarks on connected phenomena in other parts of the Indo-European world.

It follows from the restriction I have imposed upon myself that there are several Indian forms of religious belief which I am not going to touch, *viz.*, the various conceptions and so-called superstitions of the non-Aryan tribes. They can only be satisfactorily dealt with in connection with similar beliefs in other parts of the world. I shall only occasionally have to draw attention to some cases where the Aryans seem to have assimilated ideas and notions which originally belonged to these peoples.

That such must have been the case is immediately apparent when we recall the history of the Aryans in India. They came into the country as foreign conquerors, and their language and their civilisation gradually spread over the vast continent. If we examine the Aryan vernaculars of India at the present day, it is easy to see that they are derived from the speech of the ancient conquerors, and even to-day we can see how this development is going steadily on. We have an interesting example of this process in our near neighbourhood. If we look into the language of the Santals, we shall find that a very considerable number of Santali words are borrowed from the Aryans. The grammatical system, on the other hand, has much greater power of resistance such Aryan words being inflected and constructed according to Santali Grammar.

A similar state of things can be observed in other districts *e.g.*, among the non-Aryan tribes of Nepal. We also there find a largely Aryan vocabulary and an essentially non-Aryan grammar. Now the appearance of Indo-Aryan vernaculars at the present day shows that they have all of them gone through a similar development. And the result is that we have before us a series of languages and speeches, which to all appearances are purely Aryan, but of which the grammatical system in many respects shows that the foreign non-Aryan element has been assimilated and has exercised its influence on the internal structure of the language.

Something similar must necessarily have happened during the long history of Indo-Aryan religions. When a people abandons its old beliefs and adopts a new religion, that never takes place in the same way as when a man gets a new dress. There always remain numerous traces of the old belief. The old gods are apparently replaced by new ones, the ancient rites by different ceremonies; in reality, however, the change is to a great extent only one of names, of vocabulary. The new gods are worshipped much in the same spirit as the old ones, the new ceremonies are based on the conceptions which were the leading ones in the old ritual: the change of religion is not a thorough change of spirit.

Among the different tribes and peoples which are, at the present day, to all appearances quite Aryanized, we must therefore expect to find numerous features which have been inherited not from the propagators of Aryan civilization, but from the old non-Aryan tribes which have been brought under the spell of Aryan religion and Aryan thought. It is often, at the present stage of our knowledge, all but impossible to analyse the complex ideas we are met with. In some cases, however, we may perhaps be able to point to some features or some gods, which are clearly not Aryan.

It is, on the other hand, impossible to say in such cases from which non-Aryan element the foreign features have come. The population of India is not uniform, and more than one race has contributed to its development. There still remain, in addition to the Aryan proper, two ethnic elements, the Dravidians and the so-called Kolarians. The former have still preserved their ancient tongues in Southern India, but it is probable that farther to the north several Dravidian tribes have, in the course of time, abandoned their home-tongue for some Aryan speech. Such has apparently to a much greater extent been the case with the Kolarians, who are often also called Mundas.

We would naturally infer from this state of things that Dravidian conceptions have contributed to the development of religious thought in the South, and perhaps in the North-West, where we find the Dravidian Brahmins settled in Beluchistan, while the non-Aryan elements in the North, and specially in the

East, are due to the influence of a Kolarian population, which has mostly been Aryanised in the course of the centuries during which Aryan civilisation has spread over India. And from the fact that the Dravidians have to a great extent retained their old languages, while the Kolarians have largely abandoned their old speech and adopted Aryan tongues, we would be inclined to infer that the Dravidians had reached a higher stage of development than the Kolarians when the period of Aryanising set in. Both Dravidians and Kolarians would accordingly have to be considered as aboriginal inhabitants of India.

Anthropologists and ethologists, it is true, have started a theory which appears, in a certain sense, a simplification. They speak of a Dravidian race, comprising both Dravidians and Kolarians, and presenting several well defined ethnic features : a long skull, a broad nose, thick projecting lips and wavy, curly hair. The type is negroid and shows some similarity with that of Australian aboriginals. The stronghold of the race is the Dravidian South and some hilly tracts in Northern India. The Aryan conquerors came into India from the North-West, where they had, in prehistoric times, formed one people with the ancestors of the present Iranians. The Aryan features are still prevalent in the Punjab and in Rajputna and southwards.

All these seem to point to the conclusion that the Aryans, when they entered India, were met with the ancestors of this so-called Dravidian race, who would accordingly have to be considered as the Dásas and Dasyus spoken of in Vedic literature, the aboriginal inhabitants of India.

In this connection it is worth recalling the fact that Southern India is, geologically speaking, the oldest part of India, older than the great upheaval through which the Himalayas were raised, and dating back into a period when the plain of Hindustan was lying deep down below the surface of an old ocean. This old Southern Continent was of a much larger extent than at the present day. The Western Ghats mark the old water-shed of the plateau, which extended far to the West, where we have, at the present day, the Arabian Sea. It would accordingly be possible that this aboriginal race was originally connected with other aboriginal races outside of India, *e.g.* in Australia. And

the Dravidians and the Kolarians would both be the descendants of that ancient race, thus settled in India since prehistoric times.

Everything accordingly seems to fit, and we should seem to have every reason for accepting this Dravidian race-theory in its entirety.

There are, however, grave objections which, in my opinion make it impossible to do so. The anthropological survey of the Indian people is not so complete that we can use its results with full confidence, and even as it is, it shows that there are, within the Dravidian race, considerable variations in features, which point to the conclusion that there have been numerous crossings and intercrossings; that the so-called Dravidian race is not a uniform entity but consists of more than one ethnic element. And these conclusions are strengthened by a consideration of the present day languages spoken by the members of the race.

I have already mentioned that we have before us two linguistic families, the Dravidian, represented by languages such as Tamil, Telugu and Kanarese, and the Kolarian or Munda family, to which Santali, Mundari, Ho, Kurku, etc., belong. The Dravidian family is, at the present day, essentially restricted to Southern, and parts of Central India, but comprises an isolated language, that of the Brahuis in Beluchistan. Outside of India it has not been possible to point to any speech connected with Dravidian. Some scholars have thought that certain features in the languages of the Australian aborigines remind us of Dravidians; and others are inclined to think of a distant connection with certain ancient languages of Mesopotamia. But they have all failed to advance convincing proofs in favour of their theories, and at the present stage of knowledge we are constrained to consider Dravidian as an isolated language.

Kolarian tongues, on the other hand, belong to a large linguistic family comprising numerous languages and dialects in further India and on the Islands of the Indian Sea and the Pacific. The Austrian scholar, Pater Schmidt, has called this family Austric and thought it possible to point to some features from which he infers that these are also ethnic ties between the numerous tribes speaking Austric tongues.

Now the anthropologists are at the present day disinclined to lay much stress on the existence of different languages within the tribes belonging to one and the same race, and we have several examples of peoples who have adopted the speech of other races. The linguistic history of India is a good instance of such a development. Still I think that most scholars will agree in the conclusion that, wherever we find different linguistic families represented within one and the same race, there must, at some time or other, have been intercrossings between more than one ethnic element. And we must, I think, infer that such has also been the case in India in pre-Aryan times. From the fact that Kolarian is connected with numerous languages outside of India, while no speech related to Dravidian has been traced anywhere else in the world, we would be inclined to draw the conclusion that the aboriginals of India spoke some proto-Dravidian tongue, while the Kolarian languages have been imported from abroad.

But then we should expect to find a similar state of things as in the case of the Indo-Aryan vernaculars, which have been brought to India by foreign invaders. but which, in phonology and in grammatical principles, show numerous traces of the influence of the speech of the older race or races which sat in India before the Aryans came in. If Dravidian were once the language of all India, we would expect to find reminiscences of Dravidian grammatical principles in the Kolarian tongues.

Such is not, however, the case. Dravidian and Kolarian differ fundamentally, in phonology, in vocabulary and in grammar, and it is therefore very unlikely that one of the two once prevailed over the whole territory, and that the other one was subsequently engrafted on the same stock. It seems to me that we must necessarily draw the conclusion that there are, from the most remote times, two different strata in the pre-Aryan population, represented day by the Dravidians on one side and the Kolarians on the other.

But how then should we explain the apparent similarity in ethnic features which has led anthropologists to speak of one fairly uniform Dravidian race?

I cannot see any solution of this difficulty other than the assumption that we have, in the pre-Aryan population of India,

not one, but three different ethnic elements. There was an old Negroid race, once settled over the South and the forests and hills further to the North, but which was subsequently overlaid by the Dravidians in the South and by the Kolarians in the North and East. Both these races have to a great extent lost their ethnic features, just as the Prahuis in Beluchistan among their Iranian neighbours, and both can only relatively be called aboriginal, though they were no doubt in India before the Aryans.

In support of this theory I can only point to some some few details.

The existence of the Dravidian dialect in Beluchistan has often been urged in favour of the assumption that the Dravidians have come into India from abroad. And there is also one curious grammatical feature which points in the same direction.

We know that the various tenses of the Indo-European verb were real tenses, with tense suffixes and personal terminations. In Indian vernaculars, however, these tenses have to a large extent been replaced by participles. This is not an Indo-European feature, and we are inclined to think of the influence of a common non-Aryan substratum. Now it is a curious fact that the Dravidian tenses are in reality participles, and it is perhaps allowable to infer from this state of things, coupled with the evidence of Brahui, that tongues related to Dravidian were once spoken in the territory where the Indian and Iranian Aryans settled in pre-historic times, and that the influence of this substratum can be felt in the various Indo-Aryan and Iranian languages of the present day.

I know very well that such indications do not *prove* anything. Still I think it worth while to draw attention to them, and so far as I can see, it is extremely likely that the Dravidians have once, in a remote past, immigrated into India from the North-West and made themselves masters of our ancient Negroid population, especially in the South, and in parts of the North-West. Later on the Aryans followed, drove the Dravidians out of the North-West, and gradually laid the south under the spell of their higher civilization. The amalgamation has been so complete that it is, at the present day, impossible to distinguish Dravidian and Aryan elements in the common civilisation. There cannot,



however, be any doubt that the Dravidians must have had their share in the development.

In this connection it is also worth while to remind you of the great discoveries made in Sind and the Punjab by my old friends R. D. Banerjee and Daya Ram Sahni. We have been told that traces have been found of an ancient and highly developed civilisation, akin to that of the Sumerians and dating back 3,000 years B. C. It has further been stated that this civilisation seems to have extended into Beluchistan, and future finds may perhaps show that it was actually linked up with that of the Sumerians.

Are we here faced with the remnants of an ancient Dravidian or rather proto-Dravidian culture which was once established from Mesopotamia to Sind? And why did it disappear centuries before the oldest Indo-Aryan monuments were constructed? At the present day we can only put the questions. If this ancient civilisation came to an end about 3,000 years B.C. it is tempting to connect its disappearance with the Aryan conquest of India. But in that case it is extremely likely that the invaders took over more than one feature from the ancient culture of their predecessors.

Turning now to the Kolarians, we have already seen that their languages are not, like those of the Dravidians, isolated forms of speech, but belong to a widely spread linguistic, the so-called Austric, family. None of the tribes speaking Austric tongues, possess an ancient literature. Some of these tribes, later on, reached a high state of development, but then the framework seems throughout to have been borrowed from Aryan India. We should accordingly expect to find that the Kolarians have only contributed primitive and savage ideas and conceptions to the religious development of India, that the state of things with them has always been as in the case of the Santals at the present day : their religious ideas being comparatively rude and primitive, and where we find higher conceptions such as the beliefs in a highest God behind and above all the spirits and demons, his very name, Thakur, showing that we have to do with a loan from the Aryans.

There are, however, some indications which point in a different direction. It is a curious fact that the Indian craftsman,

the predecessor of the painter and the sculptor, frequently comes from the Non-Aryan castes. Such an important branch of Indian lore as the numerous popular stories and tales, which have played such an important role in the history of folklore all over the world, is by tradition principally referred to the Dekkhan, where we have every reason for supposing that Kolarians have formed a prominent part of population. The old name of Indian actors and of the Indian drama, *nata* and *nataka*, are no doubt of Aryan origin. But the actors must have something to do with the non-Aryan *nat-carti* of the present day, and in the ancient ritual a Sûdra was introduced as the seller of *soma* in an important ceremony.

We get the impression that some of the higher branches of Indian civilisation, such as have something to do with art, may partly have their origin in non-Aryan, and permanently Kolarian, Arts and Crafts.

And quite recently, the famous French scholar, Sylvain Levi, whose learning and whose penetrating mind you have learnt to admire here in Visva-bharati, has put together numerous facts, which already point to the conclusion that there was once, before the Aryan conquest, and probably also before the Dravidian invasion, an ancient civilisation, extending over a vast territory, and created by Austric tribes, and that India must have been one of the strongholds of this civilisation.

At the present day that civilisation has disappeared, having been modified and absorbed by the Aryans. But it seems to be necessary to assume that the ancestors of the Kolarians, whom the Aryan conquerors fought and subdued, were not barbarians but had reached a comparatively high state of development. And in that case they must have had a large share in the building up of Indian civilisation and also in the religious history of the country. It is not, however, possible to draw attention to details and separate features which should be considered to be of Kolarian origin. We can only say that there must be several such, and that they are most likely to be found in the ideas and notions which have framed the daily worship of the Indians during the centuries.

The Aryans have been the leaders in Indian civilization and Indian thought, and the vast religious literature of India is almost

entirely due to them. The historical student will have to base his conclusions mainly on that literature. An analysis of the popular ideas and conceptions which have not been reduced to writing, can only be made with reference to the state of things at the present day, and for the past we are restricted to drawing general conclusions. Moreover, even this popular side of religious development has, at the present day, received such a strong Aryan stamp, that we are easily led to believe that it is chiefly derived from Aryan sources.

In my present lectures I shall, therefore, as I have already said, only try to follow the development of the Aryan element in Indian religions. The remarks which I have just made show, however, that it is necessary to be on one's guard, and I cannot hope to be able to avoid mistakes. The history of the religious development of the Indo-Aryans is not, and should not be, a review of unbroken growth from one single seed. It must also comprise the numerous crossings which have taken place and sometimes largely modified the picture, and we need not be perturbed if we occasionally make mistakes in our analysis, for such mistakes are not fatal.

# THE ORIGIN OF CASTE

*A Study of Modern Views.*

By KSHITISHPRASAD CHATTOPADHYAY.

It has been remarked by a distinguished student of Indian ethnology that, from the nature of the case, the origin of caste is an insoluble problem. I mention this hopeful prophecy at the very beginning, in order that the sketchy character of this paper may be the more readily excused. Moreover, in this particular case, the available facts run into volumes, and a fair examination and co-ordination of them all would form an essay too long, perhaps, for even students of anthropology to read through.

The earliest scientific hypotheses put forward about caste are to be found in the Hindu law-books, and perhaps in the most elaborate form in the Institutes of Manu. Unfortunately, however, the terms Vaisya, Kshatriya, Bráhmāna and, still more, the term Sūdra, are not sufficiently explained therein to enable us to follow the description given in terms of these. Further, no attempt was made, probably because it was not possible, to include within these theories, the social organisation of the whole of India.

All later theories in the law-books are open to the first charge, and also, to some extent undoubtedly, to the condemnation brought forward by modern scholars, that a good part is drawn from imagination without a sufficient basis of fact. Though I personally believe that a good deal of what is at present unintelligible and seemingly unreal in these early speculations will probably, at some future date, be capable of elucidation, and will then throw much light on the early migrations and fusion of races, yet it must be admitted that, for the time being, they have to be left on one side, and that the problem may best be tackled by beginning directly with the facts available in modern times.

I shall therefore pass on to modern views of caste, with such comments as seem needful in the different cases.

The two earliest attempts to explain caste on the basis of the existing state of affairs were made by Sir Denzil Ibbettson in the Punjab, and Mr. C. J. Nesfield in the United Provinces.

Ibbettson studied the facts available in his province, and he summed up his conclusions about the origin of caste in that area as follows :

- (1) At first there was the tribal division common to all primitive societies.
- (2) As civilization grew up, the guilds based on hereditary occupation came into existence.
- (3) The priests, the Brahmans, in order to preserve their prestige and power, insisted on the hereditary nature of their occupation and the necessity of honouring all persons of priestly descent.

This they supported with all the weight of religion, elaborating from the Hindu ideas of cosmogony, a purely artificial set of rules regulating marriage and intermarriage, and declaring certain kinds of food and occupations as pure, impure, or indifferent.

They thus acquired a degree of power unparalleled elsewhere.

Ibbettson suggests, in short, that after the guild system had developed in India, with the progress of arts and industries, the hereditary nature of occupations was utilised by the Brahmans for their own advantage. He is of opinion that, naturally, the descendants of Brahmans soon grew too numerous to be all priests, but as they did not wish to relinquish the exceptional privilege and honour they obtained as priests, they made community of descent instead of occupation, the test of rank. In one word, instead of only the priests ranking as Brahmans, all descendants of Brahmans ranked as priests, although they might be only nominally, or not at all, connected with sacred duties.

This unusual achievement is considered by Ibbettson to have been possible for the Brahmans because of the specially high position they held. He is however careful to explain that he does not mean that the Brahmans invented the principle which they thus turned to their own purpose ; on the contrary the rudiments of it are found in all primitive societies and it was only the extraordinary power gained by the Brahmans that led their teaching,

probably almost unconsciously, to take the form that tended most effectually to preserve such power unimpaired.

This process, Ibbettson concludes, was quite a slow one and the provisions in the *Manu Samhita* for the elevation of castes in the social scale, show definitely how rules originally elastic gradually hardened into rigid bars.

One of the difficulties of this hypothesis is, to explain how the Brahmans, or priests, at all acquired such great power in India as to enable them thus to create caste,—a power never enjoyed by priesthood elsewhere in the world.

Priests have been faced with the similar difficulty of growing numbers in other places as well, but nowhere else have they been able to avail themselves of such device to any such extent as in India. Thus in Kashmir and in Nepal, the Buddhist clergy married and were forced to follow secular pursuits to meet the needs of family life. Consequently they formed a group comparable to the hypothetical group of Brahmans of Ibbettson. Yet, with the example of India before them, they did not succeed in forming caste among the mass of the people.

Similar is the case of the Lamas of Tibet. Although as celibate monks they do not form quite a good parallel, still it is well known that Tibet is one of the most priest-ridden countries, and the Lamas have exceptional influence. Yet, although the unrestricted admission of novices to monasteries has rendered the struggle for existence very keen among the priests, no attempt has been made to form a special caste of the relatives of Lamas, within which the priesthood should be confined.

The second defect of Ibbettson's theory is, that it does not give any explanation of the curious rules about purity and impurity of certain kinds of food, or of the restrictions about taking food of a particular kind from others. To suggest that these are purely fantastic customs adopted by the Brahmans, is merely an admission of failure to indicate the solution.

The other early theorist on caste, Mr. Nesfield, was very much impressed by what he called the fundamental unity of the Indian race. He considered the Indians as homogeneous physically, showing that the handful of Aryan invaders had been absorbed

in the vast mass of the aboriginal population, leaving no mark on their appearance.

Nesfield, therefore, suggested that caste had nothing to do with race, and was developed merely because of the gradual evolution of arts and industries. He pointed out that at the bottom of the social scale in the United Provinces come the primitive tribes, the Tharus, Kangars and others, whom he considers to be the last remnants of the undiluted aboriginal Indian savages. Next come hunters like the Bahelias, and fishermen such as the Dhimars. Then follow the pastoral Gadarias and Ahirs, and finally the great mass of agriculturists and artisans, with the lordly Rajput and the priestly Brahman crowning the whole structure.

The artisans were also graded in a similar way amongst themselves, the basket-worker holding the lowest place, with the weaver, potter and oilman in the middle, and the metal-workers, tailors and confectioners in the highest group.

Apart from the fact that Nesfield sometimes jumbles up in a single grade such curious combinations as Kayastha, Bhangi or sweeper, Bhat or bard-cum-genealogist, and Nai or barber, great difficulties have to be faced by any such evolutionary hypothesis.

First of all, it is acknowledged on all hands that original inventions of such systems are not so prolific in different parts of the world.

Even if, however, in spite of its unique character, such an independent origin be granted, the question arises that, as the creation of these grades was necessarily slow, and hence the chance of limiting them to definite groups small, whence arose any gradations at all? Why were not such grades formed elsewhere in the world? Further why are they accompanied by such curious rules of marriage and commensality and also of taboos?

All these questions Nesfield answers by the old, old retort that the Brahmans invented them to increase their power. This again amounts to nothing but an admission of failure to solve the problem.

Apart from this, there is a fundamentally wrong assumption in Nesfield's hypothesis. He assumes the occupations followed

by the castes in order of social ascendancy, to form a series of increasing complex form.

This is however highly doubtful. Weaving with looms, furnished with heddles and reeds, and the making of pottery with wheels, certainly came to be invented, at least introduced, in the ancient countries of which the past history is fairly well-known, after copper working had come into vogue, or at most, at about the same time; yet in the U. P. the Kumhar (potter) and Tati (weaver) rank below the Tattot (coppersmith). Further this theory cannot be extended to any other province of India, as the different artisans rank differently in the several provinces. And, in order to be defensible, the hypothesis would have to be formulated that the order of inventions was greatly altered in the several areas of Bengal, Bombay and Madras.

Therefore, while it may be admitted that some of the less complex and comparatively humble occupations were known in India earlier than the more developed arts, yet such a statement cannot be accepted as a whole, and certainly does not explain the origin of caste.

The next worker in the field was Sir Herbert Risley, the Superintendent of the Ethnological Surveys. The difficulty of explaining the uniqueness of caste in India was suggested by him to be due to the fact that in India alone were the Aryans brought into close contact with an unequivocally black race. The sense of difference of color, which plays such an undoubtedly large part in the relations of men, was perhaps even keener among these ancient fair-skinned invaders.

Risley points out that the opponents of the Vedic people are called by them black, noseless, coarse featured, of low stature, and so on. He suggests that this gives a fairly accurate anthropological definition of the Dravidian tribes of to-day. He adds that this repulsion due to physical differences, was supplemented by disagreements of customs, tribal structure and religion. The conclusion is obvious that the motive principle of Indian caste is to be sought in the antipathy of the higher race for the lower, of the fair-skinned Aryan for the darker Dravidian.

Risley meets one objection, which immediately occurs, that while the principle in question may possibly apply to the major



groups, it fails to account for the vast network of intricate divisions which the caste system now presents; for the differences of type which distinguish the various trading, agricultural, pastoral, and fishing castes from each other are hardly sharp enough to have brought the sentiment of race antipathy into play.

Risley's reply to this is that the numerous smaller groups came into being under the influence of fiction. He goes on to illustrate and explain what he means, by giving examples from Bengal. He tries to show that in this province the continual contact of Aryan and Dravidian has created a series of endogamous groups which may roughly be classified as Ethnic, Provincial or Linguistic, Territorial or Local, Functional or Occupational, Sectarian and Social. In the first of these classes, the race basis is palpable and acknowledged. The others have been generated by the fiction that men who speak a different language, who dwell in a different district, who worship different gods, who observe different social customs, who follow a different profession, or practice the same profession in a slightly different way, must be of a fundamentally different race.

As has been pointed out by S  nart, Risley has arrived, after various detours, finally to the same old Hindu theory of different degrees of intermixtures and an infinite number of permutations thereof.

It has been pointed out by Sanskrit scholars that Risley did not properly understand the import of the Vedas and the Smritis and unduly emphasised the condemnation of colour by the so-called Aryans. I shall here state merely two of the pieces of evidence that have been brought forward against this view. First of all, these Aryans could legally take non-Aryan wives, for which there were definite rules; secondly the issue of these marriages after inter-marrying with the Aryans for seven generations could become pure Aryans. It need hardly be emphasised that such rules do not betray an extraordinary horror of the hypothetical black aborigines.

I should also like to point out the fact that, in Africa, where men of the fair-skinned races did penetrate into the interior in early times, caste did not grow up. If sharp physical

differences created caste, one would suppose that the Caucasian type would find a sharper contrast in the Negroid in Africa than in a hypothetical sharply contrasted black race in India. Moreover, evidence from anthropometry shows definitely that the contrast in India was certainly not so great as Risley would make out.

It will have been noted that the three important theories of caste come from workers in three different provinces of North India.

Ibbettson, Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, was most impressed by the elasticity of caste bonds in that Western province. On the basis of his study of the growth of the living organism in that place, he considered that he had found the solution. The mistake was that he did not take into account the force of centuries of tradition, and also the extraordinary jumble of cultures in the area where he worked.

Nesfield, from an examination of the somatic characteristics of the people of the U. P., was led to formulate his hypothesis of the fundamental unity of race in India, and from this very naturally followed a single scheme of evolution.

Risley, who worked in Bengal mainly, was early struck by the undoubted intermixture of races that had taken place in this region and, impressed by what he observed, he sought to overcome the difficulty of uniqueness of caste by means of this fact alone.

The next worker in the field, M. S  nart had the advantage of studying carefully all these three different view points, and not being a worker in India itself, he was not obsessed by the particular speciality of any province. In addition, a profound knowledge of European lore was brought by him to bear on the problem.

As a result of his investigations, S  nart suggests that the uniqueness of the development of caste in India was the result of physical isolation. Parallel developments, he points out, had occurred in Greece and Rome. He shows that the *curiae* in Rome, the *phratry* of Greece, and the *gotra* of India closely correspond. The bounds of exogamy existed, and membership of *phratries*, as of *gotras*, was limited to offsprings of families belonging to the

group. He also shows that occupation was to some extent hereditary in these places.

The strange rules barring commensality likewise find parallels elsewhere. The food cooked at the sacred fire symbolised the unity of the family, and the religious sentiment attached to it is the explanation of the rules of the table. The expulsion of an offender from caste by solemnly pouring out water from his vessel after filling it, and the modern stopping of hukka and pani are similar to the interdiction of fire and water in Rome, while the body that wields sway, the panchayet, was undoubtedly paralleled in the ancient councils of tribes in Greece, Rome, Germany and elsewhere.

After pointing out these parallels, S  nart passes on to suggest reasons why the national unity which finally absorbed the different groups in Europe, was not attained in India. Here he takes account of the possible factors suggested by previous workers, and adds some of his own.

His hypothesis is that the Aryan invaders of India had already in them the germs of the caste system. To this basic factor were added the facts of hostile contact with a race of different colour and physique and of inferior culture. This opposition, the consequent need of security, the contempt of the vanquished,—all these increased the native arrogance of the invaders and reinforced the several beliefs and prejudices which guarded from intermixture the sections into which they were divided.

Further, the vastness of the country tended to separate the groups and to multiply divisions. As difficulties diminished, and a more settled form of social life grew up, the need for artisans was sharply felt everywhere, and these being in wide demand, were widely scattered. In the pursuit of their profession they had to come in intimate contact with the aboriginal people and some intermixture undoubtedly resulted. As there was no strong political power to wield the whole into a cohesive mass, the fissiparous tendency proceeded unchecked.

When later on some kind of examination was instituted about purity of descent, the priests who, by reason of the privileges they had gained owing to the growing complexity of rites and

ceremonies, had been able better to conserve their purity of descent, claimed and obtained the highest rank, albeit sharing it with the royal races. The artisans, originally of the same stock but now under the ban of intermixture, sank in position, and finally became still more diluted with aboriginal blood.

It must be admitted that S  nart's theory, as it stands, is not lightly to be gainsaid. The factors suggested undoubtedly played an important part in the evolution of caste. The main defect of his theory however is, that it has not taken account of the details; and further, although the suggestion about the Aryans coming with the germ of a caste system, and this latter embryo developing because of the environment, is very tempting, there are certain facts which stand in the way.

In S  nart's hypothesis two things are assumed :

- (1) That the Aryans—in the sense of Vedic people—were highly superior to the people they found in India, represented by jungle tribes at the present time.
- (2) That the caste structure is essentially the same all over India.

Both these assumptions are unjustified.

If an invading people come into a country in fairly large numbers, as the Vedic Aryans are postulated to have done, something very like uniform pressure is brought to bear upon the people, in front as well as on the flanks of the forward wave of migration. In such case what happens is, that the earlier people are driven into what might be termed safety pockets,—places in the country which allow of a fair livelihood, but which are difficult of access to invaders. In India, there are some such places and the chief among them in North India, are Nepal, Assam, and Chota Nagpore though the last has to be distinguished from the other two as not being suitable for comfortable existence with only a primitive knowledge of arts and industries.

If, therefore, the people of the plains were driven out by the incoming Aryan tide, we should expect to find remnants of that culture in these places. Investigation shows that such is actually the case, but it also definitely brings out that their culture were not so inferior as has been made out by S  nart and others, and

also that these earlier people were themselves an intermixture with some fine-featured race.

Physical anthropology does not count definite quantitative data from Nepal, nor to any large extent from Assam, but so far as the careful observation of trained observers go, they agree that the high castes in these places have undoubtedly Caucasian features, although Mongolian admixtures occur. The characteristics of their culture show that they passed through India.

We have therefore to admit that the so-called Aryans were preceded by a fine-featured, cultured race in India. Now, the remnants of this migration into Nepal and Assam show definitely that, while guilds were developed in their society, and the cultured invaders tended to preserve their racial purity, caste did not evolve. Secondly the peculiar rules about commensality are absent to a large extent.

This much at least follows that a fine-featured, cultured race could penetrate into India, diffusing their civilisation and intermixing to some extent with the people, yet although the country was vast and the aborigines black, caste as an institution was not evolved. It has therefore to be admitted that while all these factors certainly tend to help the crystallisation of caste, yet they are not sufficient for its initiation.

The second assumption of S  nart was, that the caste organisation is fairly uniform all over India. But actual examination shows that the structure in Bengal is almost the reverse of that in the U.P., while Orissa bears no direct relation to either. If the different linguistic areas of Madras are now examined, the confusion passes all limits.

One conclusion, however, emerges definitely from an analysis of the social structure in different parts of India. It is that there were migrations of culture to India before the Vedic Aryans came, and that, roughly at least, these correspond to the culture remnants found in Nepal and Assam.

It is not possible to indicate within the limits of this paper all the points of agreement I have been able to detect. I should like however to point out two facts :

(1) That the food and drink used by one at least of the

earlier migrations differed distinctively from that of the later Aryan migration.

- (2) That the rules of marriage were comparatively simple and elastic. Divorce was easy and widow marriage permitted. That among the common people whom they influenced the relation of the sexes before marriage was similar to the present state of affairs in the Munda and Oraon community, conception being usually followed by marriage.

I therefore suggest that the inception of caste was due to the hostile contact of a later cultured people, presumably the Vedic Aryans, with an earlier cultured race. In the struggle for existence that ensued, each group sought to increase its man-power by enlisting the aboriginal population as far as possible on its side.\* Analysis of the cultures show that while one had the advantage of earlier settlement and greater experience of the country and its peoples, the other balanced it to a large extent by greater numbers and their superior knowledge of certain arts.

In order to influence and enlist the comparatively primitive aborigines, it was necessary to benefit them to some extent; for this reason, and also to utilise them properly, they had to be taught some at least of the arts that were brought by the migrants. It was, at the same time equally important to prevent a leakage of such knowledge to the opposite camp and to the people in general. The general sentiment of contempt that a half civilised people feel, after contact with a superior culture, for their own uncultured brethren, probably supplied a powerful check. But the most effective limit was found in :

- (1) The wide difference of food used by the rival peoples, the same substance being taboo to one people, and indifferent to the other.
- (2) The difference in the religious belief and the gods worshipped.
- (3) The opposite character of the relations of the sexes among the two sets of people, one tending towards

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\**Cf.* the rival solicitation of the "masses" by the different political parties of the day.—*Ed.*

easy union, the other towards immolating the widow with her deceased husband.

I suggest that these were consciously or unconsciously moulded into rigid bars about the groups that were formed. The vastness of the country, as S  nart opines, led to scattering; consequently there was greater difficulty of self-preservation, adding thereby to the stringency of the safeguards. On this hypothesis the smaller local caste groups (sub-castes) were the first to grow, being later classed as one caste on the common basis of occupation and tradition.

Such a multiple-migration hypothesis of caste overcomes the difficulty of diversity in the social structure in different parts of India. For on analysis it appears that there were two to three distinct culture migrations in most parts of India, before history proper begins; now, although caste might originate by hostile contact between two cultures, there was no reason why the same migrants should triumph in every part of the country.

Further the third migration might have brought in other new elements. Consequently, the problem is reduced to analysing the different social structures in different parts of India and reconstructing therefrom the different culture migrations.

So far as I have been able to do this, I have not met with any insuperable difficulty. Obviously, however, such an analysis cannot be attempted within the present limits.

THE SONG BIRD.

*By* RABINDRANATH.

When the evening steals on western waters,  
Thrills the air with wings of homeless shadows,  
When the sky is crowned with star-gemmed silence  
And the dreams dance on the deep of slumber ;  
When the lilies lose their faith in morning  
And in panic close their hopeless petals,  
'There's a bird which leaves its nest in secret,—  
Seeks its song in trackless paths of heaven.



## CULTURE AND TECHNICAL PROGRESS

By COUNT HERMANN KEYSERLING.

There has been much talk in Europe during the last decades, about the opposition between Culture and Civilisation; in particular in Germany, where Oswald Spengler's famous book "The Decline of the West" is almost entirely built up upon the assumption of this opposition. Culture in the real sense, as it was manifested in ancient Babylonia, India and China, in ancient Greece and the Europe of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the Rocco periods, and Civilization in the modern, purely external and technical sense, are indeed two very different things. There is no doubt either, that in the modern world, the former is no longer to be found except in small groups, which count ever less and less in the movement of history.

No wonder, therefore, that many of the best in our days feel frankly inimical towards civilization. Unfortunately, however, repudiation or negation has never arrested the process of Destiny. Technical progress, the soul of this civilization, is nothing less than mankind's fate for the next centuries to come. Fate can only be overcome by reaching a plane beyond the range of its possible action. It is about this that I venture to put forward, in the following, a few suggestions.

What does the word *Culture* really mean? It means the correspondence of the inside and the outside of life in this sense, that all the forms of a given existence are the immediate expression of a living spirit. This short definition includes everything that can be stated about the essential meaning of Culture: viz., that every cultural manifestation is tied to a living past and in so far implies responsibility; that it is symbolical in the two-fold sense, that anything "cultural," on the one hand, gives, expression to Significance, "and on the other, incarnates the latter in the forms of a corresponding image; that it is exclusive and therefore strictly confined, like any organism, and belongs to a unified whole which is being mirrored by every single manifestation.

"Culture" is really a spiritual organism. If this be so, then it is clear from what moment onwards external civilization, which can very well mean culture, is such no longer : when its expression does no longer mean anything inward ; and since the latter is manifestly the case within the whole modern westernized world, it is undoubtedly true, as Spengler and many others maintain, that we are living in an age of civilization as opposed to an age of culture.

There are many who relate this state of decay—for such indeed it is—to our "progress" in the technical and mechanical sense. And this much is certain : the unlimited applicability of any product of Technique, unlimited in the sense of space, time and any other bonds contradicts the very spirit of real culture, a manifestation which is possible everywhere at all times, cannot represent an immediate expression of Spirit. And in so far Technical progress undoubtedly leads, not to cultural accomplishment and consummation, but to barbarization.

Wherever mechanical civilization spreads, no life-form of the pre-technical age resists in the long run ; it is bound to die out. This is proved to-day even by those exclusive sets and classes in France and England whose consolidated culture succeeded until recently in resisting disintegration : for any one to whom cinema and radio, racing, aviating and globetrotting, in their negation of all limits of time and space, are matters of course, it is simply impossible to remain bound by and to forms of life, whose very possibility depends on narrow internal as well as external confines.

The same will appear more and more in the East also ; it will appear there more strikingly still because the contrast between the Indian caste system with all its restrictions, or the Chinese code of rites with all its complications and intricacies (to point out but two examples), and the ways of modern life, is much greater than any contrast between the cultured West of old and the merely civilized West of to-day. Ancient culture is dying fast all over this planet ; it is dying irresistibly. And there can be no doubt that this is due to technical progress more than to anything else.

The recognition of this fact calls forth, as a typical reaction, two different attitudes.

Some people—they are particularly numerous in the European countries ruined by the War—deem that culture in the old inward sense is no longer possible upon Earth, or at any rate upon its Western hemisphere. Others—these are more frequent in the East—expect salvation from a return to pre-technical conditions. It is no use arguing with the first named, for if a man does not believe in something, he assuredly does not want it either, with any important part of his soul, and he therefore cannot be made to realize his error.

The attitude of the other groups could be right, if the processes of nature were reversible,—if mankind in particular could go back upon any attained state at all. But this it cannot; all historical processes are essentially irreversible. And this means in the case of our particular argument: never more, whatever idealists may hope, will machinery vanish from this world; the machine will go on gaining victory after victory until it has conquered every single spot on earth.

The chief reason for this is the fact, which apparently has so far failed to strike most thinkers, that technical achievement means nothing extraordinary, but on the contrary, a manifestation of the obvious. As all mathematical truths, however difficult to grasp they may seem, are essentially obvious, for they express the intrinsic laws which rule both body and mind, just so are even the most astonishing technical performances. This alone explains why they appeal most to the least cultured classes and races. The United States first became mechanised of all countries, because at the beginning of the process the Americans were, of all Westerners, the most uncultured; in the same way, extreme mechanisation of life meets to-day with the least inner resistance in bolshevic Russia.

The true significance of the facts became first clear to me on that memorable day when I discovered that my little son, then three years old, who shows no particular disposition for mechanics, understands perfectly the real nature of a motor-car, which to me has remained a sort of uncanny mystery. Mechanics

belong to the obvious side of things, just as mathematics do. The question is merely to realise their obviousness.

It is, of course, not everybody's business to do this independently, or for the first time. But then invention is in no case everybody's business. The obviousness of a truth can only be gauged by the percentage of people who realize it at once, when it is put before their eyes. Now the technical achievements of our age appear surely obvious to a greater number than did any cultural manifestations since the age of stone. There will soon be no human being on earth of more than ape-like intelligence, who will not consider the Radio as simple a thing as the Multiplication-table.

I think this short train of thought must have refuted, once and for all, the arguments of all those who preach renouncement of technical progress. It is absolutely impossible to stop an evolution which meets with the understanding approval of all but an infinitesimal minority. And it is just as impossible to stop this evolution in the East as it is in the West, notwithstanding all temperamental differences. If Buddhism and Islam became the creed of millions in their day, because their gospel brought with it the abolishment of many of the social disabilities which prevented the rise of the majority to better conditions of life, the same will be true a thousand times more in this irreligious age.

But the same train of thought also shows that the inevitable need not imply a cultural catastrophe. If technical achievements belong to the essentially obvious, then they will also be thought of as obvious before long; and this will necessarily lead to the result that they will soon no longer command any particular interest.

Even to-day they do not mean, in Europe at any rate, anything like what they meant twenty years ago. Their quality of surprise has gone; it will never be born again, even if it should become possible one day to bring down the moon by some technical freak, for on principle everything that is possible henceforth on this line can be foreseen. As to the practical side of the matter—there is no doubt whatever that the most astonishing of our latest technical performances will meet with the same fate as did the bicycle. While in the beginning there were but gentlemen

riders, this vehicle is now no longer a means at all to gain distinction, and where this is not the case, ambition finds no food.

Now what will happen when all mechanical inventions will have become obvious and uninteresting in the same sense and degree? They will mean to the mind the same and nothing more than did previously the material out of which the engineer manufactured his engines, which means, in its turn, that they will have become the basis, *unnoticed in itself*, of all future thoughts and desires. Then the machine world will mean to practical men exactly the same and no more, as the world of nature did in the pre-technical age. Well, from this moment the opposition between Culture and Civilization, which is valid enough to-day, will have become obsolete, for the civilized condition will then have become the basis of *all* human life. Then the level of all possible problems will appear transposed. And this everywhere in the upward and not in the downward sense.

There can be no doubt whatsoever that man as the Lord of Nature is a greater being than man as Nature's subject. *And then culture in the previously determined sense of "life-form as immediate expression of a spirit" which has become impossible to-day, will become possible once again, and in a more all-embracing and more encompassing sense than ever before.* Then spirit will have become able to express itself through the medium of technically conquered nature, as originally as it did in the days of old Greek or Chinese culture.

In this direction lies the salvation from mechanisation and technicism, so far as such salvation is required. There is no other salvation possible nor even conceivable. He who wishes for culture in the consecrated sense can henceforward aspire to such only on the above described higher plane of nature. On the other hand, it is undoubtedly possible to build up a new culture on these new foundations, for this pre-supposes only that the achievements of technique have really become obvious to the mind, and a matter of course to the impulses and instincts. In this short article I could not do more than just state the problem.

Those who want to know from me in what definite terms it must be formulated, in the East on the one hand, and on the other in the West, and to what new forms of life its solutions

must lead in both cases, should read my "Travel Diary of a Philosopher" which is now available in an excellent English translation;\* if they know German they should also read my book "Schoepferische Erkenntnis"†. Unless I am very much mistaken there is a danger that many of the best minds of the East should misjudge the situation and work for the regeneration of mankind on a plane of existence which the process of history has left behind everywhere and for evermore.

There is no European alive who admires the ancient wisdom of the East more than I do. My School of Wisdom at Darmstadt is again and again being attacked for the very reason that I am supposed to transplant Indian recognitions into the West. But as I know life as it is to-day all over the world, I feel absolutely certain that even the Truth of old India must incarnate in a new body, corresponding to present-day conditions, in order to live again. Idealism is a very wonderful thing, but without common sense it never leads to perfection. And the first thing that common sense demands in all cases is to take and face given conditions as they really are.

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\*Published in 1927, simultaneously by Messrs. Jonathan Cape in London, 17, Gower Street, and Harcourt Brace & Co in New York, 383, Madison Avenue.

†Published by Otto Reichl, Darmstadt.

### EDITOR'S NOTE.

We would remind Count Keyserling of the warning of Mr. A. J. Penty :

Of course this system (*of the unrestricted use of machinery and mechanical methods*) cannot last. Its own activities are generating toxins which are poisoning it. For while, on the one hand, it is giving rise to wholesale incompetence (*of individuals*), on the other, by destroying all charm in work and turning it into hated toil, it has roused a spirit of class hatred that expresses itself in revolt. Finally it uses up natural resources at such a ruinous rate that, apart from any other consideration, the limit of exhaustion must soon be reached.

And the message of M. Romain Rolland :

We know the material ties that weigh on twentieth century Europe. the crushing determination of economic conditions that hem it in; we know that centuries of passions and systematised error have built a crust about it which the light cannot pierce. But we also know what miracles the spirit can work.

Both published in the Editorial Article of our last July number.

Neither of these thinkers belong to the East.

### THE OPPOSITES: IDEALISM AND PRAGMATISM.

Every man, who does anything in the world, works by the force given to him by ideals,—whether his own or others’—which he may or may not recognise, but in whose absence, nevertheless, he would be impotent. The smaller the ideals, the fewer, the less recognised, the less is the work done, the progress achieved ; on the other hand, when ideals enlarge themselves, when they become forceful, widely recognised, when different ideals enter the field, clash and communicate force to each other, then the race rises to its great periods of activity and creation.

Wherever and whenever the mere practical man abounds and discourages by his domination the idealist, in that age or country is the least valuable work done for humanity. On the other hand when the idealist is liberated, when the visionary abounds, then the executive worker, also uplifted, finds at once both orientation and energy, and accomplishes things which he would otherwise have rejected as a dream or a chimera.

Often enough, even when these two different types of men work in the same cause, and one more or less fulfils the other, they distrust, dislike and repudiate each other. To the practical worker, limiting himself by patent forces and actual possibilities, the idealist who made his work possible seems an idle dreamer or a trouble come fanatic ; to the idealist, the practical man, even while he is realising the first steps towards the ideal, seems a coarse spoiler of the divine work, almost an enemy.

And times there are, ages of stupendous effort and initiative, when the gods seem no longer satisfied with this tardy and fragmentary working, when the ideal constantly breaks through the material walls of the practical life. Innumerable ideas meet and wrestle in the arena of the world, and through the storm and flash, the possibility of the victoriously fulfilled ideal, the hope of the Messiah, the expectation of the Avatar, takes possession of the hearts and thoughts of men.

Such an age seems now to be coming upon the world.

—Aurobindo,

## THE UNIVERSAL QUEST

By PROF. S. HANMANTHRAO.

The object of this paper is not to carry on any philosophical discussion. It only makes an humble endeavour to find out the common features of the religions of the world. It aims to emphasise the idea of the Common Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, to show that an examination of the conditions of the past will lead us to the conclusion that, through all the numerous vicissitudes of human history, man has been aiming at Truth, to attain the infinite Treasure which when reached, all else appears fleeting and transitory.

The Egyptian worship is described as Nature Worship. The sun was worshipped as a God. The Nile was worshipped as a God. The Vedic Aryans who came to India and expressed some of the earliest thoughts of mankind also worshipped the forces of Nature that surrounded them. The Ganges became a goddess. The sun was a God. There was, however, already an indication that this worship of Nature, might degenerate into the worship of a number of Gods. The Vedic seers felt the necessity of emphasising the unity that underlay this diversity. They pointed out that the forces of Nature were only manifestations of the one source of All-Energy.

*That which exists is one ; sages call it variously as Agni, Yama, Mátirisvá.*

The daily midday prayer prescribed for every *dwi*ja or twice-born runs thus :

*He is the sun dwelling in the bright Heaven, He is the air dwelling in the sky, He is the fire dwelling in the sacrificial hearth, He is the guest approaching the house, He dwells in men, in Gods, in the sacrifice and in heaven. Substances emanating from water, from earth, from sacrifice, from mountains,—all these are the true (God).*

In course of time, however, these fundamental truths came to be forgotten. Greater emphasis came to be laid on form and



ritual. Magic practices, elaborate spells, incantations and animal sacrifices, became the order of the day. To some extent, the change was due to the contact with the non-Aryan races in India. In this wilderness of ritual and formalism, the fundamental principles of the unity of God-head were being lost sight of. Such a condition of things did not satisfy the quest of Man. He began to feel that reality did not consist in the formal worship of the day. He felt that he was groping in darkness. He felt no joy in what he saw. Everywhere there was doubt and a spirit of questioning. Hence arose the cry of the Upanishad seers :

*Lead me from the unreal to the real, Lead me from darkness to light,  
Lead me from death to Immortality.*

There was a craving to know the real nature of God. Is he something objective, outside yourself? Is he to be found only in the sacrificial hearth? Is religion a thing that can be put on whenever you like and dispensed with whenever it is not wanted? No. The Upanishad seers came to realise that the whole world is enveloped by Him :

*He sees you though you cannot see Him. Your senses function only  
on account of His energy. He is the Ear of the ear, Mind of the mind,  
Speech of speech, Life of life, Eye of the eye.*

Here is the greatest step taken in the development of human thought. The God we seek is not a despot whose throne it is very difficult to approach, but is a God who is as much within you as without you. There is a divine spark within us and it is our duty to eliminate the brute within and suffuse ourselves with the divine spirit. The Upanishads embody the highest ethical code when they ask us not to lead a life of passivity, but a life full of action.

*By performing works do you live a hundred years.*

Action by itself is not bad. It is only attachment to worldly pleasures and pains that causes misery. Hence perform works, but without attachment. Unselfish devotion to the world becomes the highest duty of man. The highest social good is

more important than individual welfare. When the individual realises that his welfare is others' welfare and others' welfare is his own, he approaches the goal. He comes nearest to God.

The Upanishads, thus, point out unity in diversity. But it is the irony of History that even at times when Humanity seems to be very near the "Promised Land", it tends to go far from it. So, a few centuries after the age of the Upanishads, we again witness doubt and questioning.

Just as the great thinkers of the modern world are convinced that no world-reconstruction is possible at the present moment, unless it is based on solid moral foundations, so also was the same conviction felt by the thinkers of that time, and the one leader—who for all ages, has won the reverence of all Hindu India—was Sri Krishna. He combined in his personality the characteristics of a great warrior and statesman, poet and philosopher, politician and saint. He was the singer of that Divine Song,—the song of harmony and peace, the song of universal prayer and faith. Here is no prescribed ritual, here is no special road to salvation, but *however man approach Him even so does He welcome them, for the path men take from every side is His*. It is only ignorance that fails to see the unity in this diversity.

Once again, in language much simpler than that of the Upanishads, an attempt is made to solve the Universal Quest. Once more, it is declared that human welfare does not depend upon any bribe offered to the priest, but on right conduct. No intellectual somersault can enable you to realise the All-soul. Humility, unpretentiousness, harmlessness, forgiveness, rectitude, purity, self-control, unattachment, absence of egoism,—these are the ways of the seeker.

Do we find any difference between these teachings of the leader of Hinduism and the Eight-fold path of the Great Buddha,—Right views, right aspirations, right speech, right conduct, right mode of livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right rapture? Is it right to call Buddha a denouncer of Activity when we find him saying: *It is true that I preach extinction but*

*only the extinction of pride, lust, evil thoughts and ignorance, not that of forgiveness, love, charity and truth? Is it not the same ideal of right conduct that is embodied in the doctrine of the Jains, that the five duties of a Jain are ahimsa, charity, honesty, chastity and renunciation of worldly interest? Is not the same idea expressed by England's poet :*

He prayeth well who loveth well  
Both man and bird and beast  
He prayeth best who loveth best  
All things both great and small.

While human thought was undergoing this development in India, it was equally active in those regions where the great civilisations of Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, Chaldea and Persia held their sway. There also religion began with nature worship and degenerated into formalism, and ritual. About 2,000 B. C. there appeared a great king in Egypt, Ikhnaten by name, who endeavoured to establish the faith in one God and made it the religion of his Empire. It will be an interesting study to find out what was the exact connection that existed between Ancient India and the contemporary oriental civilisations.

Several centuries later there appeared the great prophet of Persia who in the words of Tagore "was the greatest of all the pioneer prophets, who showed the path of freedom to men, the freedom of moral choice, the freedom from blind obedience to unmeaning injunctions, freedom from the multiplicity of shrines which draw our worship away from the single-minded chastity of devotion." He was one of those who appealed to the God-sense in man :

*When I conceived of Thee, O Mazda, as the very first and the last, as the most adorable one, as the father of good thought as the creator of Truth and Right, as the Lord Judge of our actions in life, then I made a place for Thee in my very eyes.*

Is not this a repetition of the thought of the Upanishad :

*This deity who is manifesting himself in the activities of the universe always dwells in the heart of man as the supreme soul. Those who realise His through the immediate perception of the heart attain Immortality.*

Three thousand years of human history are completed before we hear anything of western civilisation. All memories of that period are lost except in India and China. Throughout this period we observe the same tendency in the development of Religion. It begins with nature worship and tribal gods, but ends in the realisation of the All-in-one.

We now pass on to the pioneers of west-European civilisation—the Greeks and the Romans. We are still dazzled by the so-called classical learning. The study of their city-state still forms the beginning of all political education. As the Hindus invoke Ganesa before they commence any good action, we moderns invoke Aristotle, before we commence the study of Politics or Economics, Poetry or Ethics. We are told that while man hitherto merely aimed at life, the city-state enabled him to lead a good life. We are told, that it is like the dawn of responsibility in a youth, who suddenly discovers that life is neither easy nor aimless, and that mankind is growing up.

May we not, with greater truth, affirm that this discovery that life is neither easy nor aimless was made at least 2,000 years before Aristotle, when the Upanishad sages declared that the highest aim of man's life is to know his *self*?

No one can deny the fact that Greece elevated spiritual life by giving the greatest scope to freedom of thought. It soon passed over the stage of tribal gods and came to understand the meaning of a moral life. In Asia, Socrates and Epictetus would have become Gods. We find the same belief in single Infinite power, the same doctrine of detachment from the things of the Earth, the same advice to live a life full of action, in the teachings of Socrates and Epictetus, as we find in the Upanishads and the Gita. When Epictetus asks you to take all things contentedly, is he not approaching the *Mahátmá* of the Upanishads; the great man, who is *prasánta* peaceful, *yuktátmanah* at one with God and *nirdvandva* free from opposites? If you always remember that God stands by, an inspector of whatever you do, either in soul or in body, you will never err either in your prayers or actions and you will have God abiding with you. It was Sri Krishna who expressed this same idea in the Song Celestial :

*Surrender all actions to me, with thy thoughts resting on the supreme self, from hope and egoism freed and of mental fever cured, engage in battle.*

The city-state embodied the highest intellectual development of the time, but it reached only a small portion of all humanity. Alexander attempted to hellenise the then known world. There was for a time the prospect of the East and West coming together. But the prospect soon vanished. However, the idea of Alexander remained as a powerful tradition. Rome with its wonderful development from a tiny little city into the greatest Empire of the times reminds one of the wonderful growth of the little tiny Anglo-Saxon state into the British Empire of the present day. The moral and social structure was all the time shaking underneath. The Roman institutions were best suited to a Republic. They were not adjusted to suit the needs of an Empire. With the rise of Marius and Sulla, the best days of the Republic were over, and military power came to predominate over the civil. The great philosopher-emperor, Marcus Aurelius, is only an exception in that long line of emperors that represented the decline and fall of the Roman Empire.

It was a period of inequality, a period of general misery and vice. There was a general feeling of disgust,—even a spirit of doubt in the existence of God,—If there is really a God, why is he so silent! The cry was heard and one of the greatest figures of History appeared in the person of Jesus. He came with a gospel, not for the few, but for all. He came to announce that the Lord is not the Lord of the rich or the mighty, but the Lord of the meek and the lowly. Can there be a nobler personification of the Upanishad ideal: *Enjoy by giving away, covet not*,—than that figure of Jesus at the crucifixion?

In a few centuries, it became the official religion of the Roman Empire and no one will deny the softening and purifying tendencies of the early Christian doctrine in western Europe. But, at the same time, like Hinduism of long ago, Christianity also was subjected to a process of deterioration. Dogma and

ritual became more important than Truth, and the coming of a new prophet became necessary.

Muhammad created the new awakening: *that God is not merely the God of to-day or tomorrow, carved out of wood or stone, but the mighty, loving, merciful Creator of the world.* When the popular beliefs of Christianity overshadowed the truth that was proclaimed by Jesus, Muhammad once more emphasised the underlying unity of all the diversity that is manifested in the Universe. He says in the Koran:

*It is He who causeth the lightning to appear unto you to strike fear and to raise hope and formeth the pregnant clouds. The thunder celebrateth His praise and the angels also. He launcheth his thunderbolts and striketh therewith whom He pleaseth while they dispute concerning Him. . . . It is He who of right ought to be invoked and those whom they invoke besides Him shall not respond to them at all. . . Sight perceives Him not, but He perceives men's sights: for He is the All-penetrating: the Aware.*

This is the same idea as was expressed by the Upanishad sages when they said:

*From fear of Him fire burns, from fear of Him the sun shines, from fear of Him the wind blows and from fear of Him death is rampant.*

*He who cannot be seen by the eyes but who causes the eye to perceive all visible objects, know Him alone as God, Him who stands so near.*

Do we not find in the teachings of the Koran, the same monotheistic spirit that is exhibited in the Upanishads, the same importance attached to *sraddhá* or faith and prayer, the same insistence upon right conduct and right action that you find in the Gítá?

The conquests of Islam during the centuries following Mahammad form one of the most amazing spectacles in history. They are no doubt the result of physical power, but also of the strong religious force behind it. The religion of Islam produced a greater moral effect than that of the then decadent Christianity. The Christian priesthood lost its moral force when its priests became leaders of armies. Is Christianity justified in the charge

of militarism brought against Islam, when the Popes fought against Emperors and created human hate instead of Christian love?

The medieval popes parted from the early injunctions of the Saint of Galilee : *My kingdom is not of this world*,—and began to interfere in temporal matters as intermediaries between God and Emperor. The jealousies and quarrels between the rival popes, the flagrant immorality that existed in the church, the total neglect of their duties to their flock reminds us of the condition of the Hindu popes at the present day. A reaction came, there was a spirit of freedom and true inquiry, a craving for righteousness, and we have the Renaissance and the Reformation. But instead of inaugurating an era of peace and Christian brotherhood, there was more bitterness and war.

Medieval Emperors were so dazzled with the traditions of Alexander, Caesar and Augustus, that they did not try to evolve the principle of group-consciousness and group-mind that was underlying the feudal scheme of medieval polity. The chance of harmony, peace and brotherhood, that was lost once when Alexander died a premature death, was lost for a second time when the medieval system of polity and religion failed, giving place to national states and national religions. The moral foundations of the state were gone and the principle "where the safety of one's country is at stake there must be no consideration of what is just or unjust, merciful or cruel, glorious or shameful : on the contrary everything must be disregarded save that course which will save her life and maintain her independence" became the Bible of the nation-states. How far away is this conception from that of Aristotle, that the end of the state is the development of the moral and intellectual life of the community, and the view of the early Fathers that the end of the state is primarily to smooth men's way to salvation.

I do not under-rate the Humanitarian movements of the eighteenth century ; the teachings of Voltaire, Rousseau and the other French thinkers who succeeded in raising the value of the Individual in the state ; or the efforts of poets, novelists and philosophers throughout western Europe in rousing the dormant

soul in man. But during the last century and half, there has been a counter current,—the false ideal of Nationalism.

Just as religion, which ought to unite people, also divided peoples, the movement of Nationalism which started as a movement of unity led to divisions among groups. What harm to Universal Brotherhood this doctrine of rampant nationalism was capable of doing, no nation seriously considered, until the disastrous catastrophe known as the World War broke out. Religion was declared out of court in politics. The Biblical commandment : *Love thy neighbour* was left aside as only good enough amongst individuals within a country. It ceased to have application between two different countries. The machiavellian doctrine came into force, that whatever is done for the greatness of your own nation is in itself the highest morality.

That has been the trend of History in Western Europe during the last thirteen centuries. What was the course of events in the East?

Islam, ultimately driven from Europe made its permanent home in the East. It exercised a great influence on India. It seems correct to say that, at least from the 14th century onwards, Hindu thought came to be consciously affected by the teaching of Islam. The belief in one All-merciful, All-loving God who can be realised not by any intellectual process but by faith and prayer, is evident in all the religious ferment that was taking place in the various parts of India during this period. The doctrine of Divine Love, *bhakti*, or devotion is the chief feature of the Hinduism of the period. As in Sufism, here is no ritual, no formalism, no medium between the worshipped and the worshipper. It is the universal path of communion between the finite soul and the Infinite Soul. It consists in complete self-forgetfulness. There is no longer the feeling of I and Mine. The individual feels *he is not the doer, but God is the doer*.

There was no period in Indian History after Asoka more favourable for this outburst of the religion of the heart—the religion of Love—than that of Akbar. It was the period when Christian missionaries for the first time dared to preach their doctrines in this country. It was also the period when in various parts of the country, vernacular religious literature began to



develop. It was the period when a knowledge of Hindu philosophy became possible to the Muhammadans through Persian translations of the Upanishads and the Epics. It was also the period when the mysticism of the Sufi saints must have influenced the devotional side of Hinduism.

Akbar, by taking an active part in this evolution of a new religion based on the underlying principles of all the religions of the time, Hinduism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Islam was attempting a revolution which had no precedent in the history of the world. He was attempting to revive the true Upanishad spirit implied in the words :

*That word which all Vedas record, which all penances proclaim, which men desire when they live as religious students, that word I tell thee briefly. It is Om. It means all this.*

What Akbar tried to establish by his example and precept, Kabir the poet-philosopher infused into the popular mind :

O servant ! where dost thou seek me ?

Lo I am beside Thee !

I am neither in temple, nor in mosque,

I am neither in Kaaba, nor in Kailash ;

If thou art a true seeker, thou shalt at once see me,

Thou shalt meet me in a moment of time.

Kabir says : "O sadhu ! God is the breath of all breath."

Here was the man who realised that he is at once the child of Allah and Rám. Is not the same idea stated in the Koran : *Wheresoever ye turn, there is the face of Allah*, and also by the poet saint Ibn ul Arabi :

My heart has become capable of every form

It is a pasture for gazelles and a convent for christian monks

And a temple for idols and the pilgrim's kaaba

And the table of the Tera and the book of the Koran.

I follow the religion of Love, whichever way his camels take

My religion and my faith is the true religion.

And by Jalaluddin Roumi :

If there be any lover in the world, O Moslems 'tis I

This earth and heaven with all that they hold

Angels, peris, genii and mankind, 'tis I

There would have been probably no Hindu-Moslem trouble in India had Dara Shikoh succeeded to the throne of Delhi, instead of Aurangzeb. Hindu India has yet to learn what a great mystic Dara Shikoh was. He realised the truth that Elaha Allalla and Ekannevâdwitîyam are one and the same. He realised the Koranic truth :

*He is within your very souls but ye see Him not.*

He was one of those who succeeded in obtaining solitude in the midst of crowds, retirement in the thick of bustle and wordly noise. He realised that worldliness does not consist in dress, money, sons and wife but in the non-remembering of God. It was nothing but an irony of history that Dara did not succeed to the Delhi throne.

The period of Aurangzeb and his successors, followed by the rise and growth of British dominion in India, is a matter of recent history. A policy of religious neutrality has been followed, more or less, by the British in India. It is too early to arrive at a true estimate of its effects. But it can be said without doubt that they made the modern reforming movements possible. Without their moral support, leaders of reform like Raja Ram Mohun Roy and Veerasalingam would have found no scope. But how far have we proceeded towards Universal Brotherhood? Has the Brahmin given up his intellectual pride and realised that the God in Heaven is the God of the meek and lowly and not of the calculating and the cunning? Has the follower of Islam realised that Ram and Rahim are different names of the same source of All-Intelligence and All-Love?

At the beginning of the 20th century, the whole world was shocked at the destruction of all that was best in European art and European Literature, and all the greatest minds of western Europe were compelled to make the sorry confession that Christianity has failed to produce that principle of universal love, which is the same between individuals as well as nations. The eighteenth and nineteenth century political thought justifies the authority of the state only when it represents the totality of the wills of the individuals and the groups within it. Is it not the

highest achievement of human endeavour to enlarge the boundaries of such a state to the boundaries of the world?

Why have all previous attempts failed? Alexander, Caesar, Constantine, Napoleon, Kaiser William,—none have succeeded because they began at the top and not at the bottom. They came as conquerers trying to establish unity by force and not by good will. Is it not the existence of this spirit of Force among the Big Allies that has postponed Peace?

The atmosphere is not yet clear. There is still a feeling that a common organisation only means subjection to different authority. Is it not possible to get rid of this feeling in the International sphere, as it was got rid of in the national sphere? It will never be possible so long as by unity we mean the establishment of a superior "culture" at the point of the sword. It will not be possible while the Christian missionary believes and preaches that universal welfare depends upon conversion to his own religion. It will also not be possible if the two great communities of this country,—Hindu and Moslem,—believe in the existence of a fundamental barrier between themselves.

What then is the proper solution? The evolution of a common Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man, not by fight, not by conquest, but by the absorption of all that is good everywhere in every race and in every state.

The ideal of forcing all states into a single Empire or partitioning them among two or three Big Empires has not succeeded in History. But is the new experiment of a League of Nations, based on the principle of self-determination, going to be a success, or is it going to be a huge delusion leading to a greater war, where more science, more wealth and more ingenuity is going to be used for destruction? The answer depends upon the new meaning that is to be given to Human Endeavour; whether it should consist in love, suffering and sacrifice, or might, victory and conquest.

The East is helping the West in the solution of this problem in the same way in which Jesus did two thousand years ago. No two figures have excited the admiration of the world, since Christ and Buddha, as Gandhi and Tagore. The West believed in

progress based on material strength and prosperity. The East is now teaching the West to believe in the strength of sacrifice, suffering and love.

East and West are now linked together in a manner in which they were never linked before. May we not expect in these portents a true "Federation of the World" based not on brute strength, but on moral force? Can we not expect that a greater step will be taken than at any previous stage in Human History for the realisation of the truth expressed in the words of the poet :

Father of all in every age  
in every clime adored  
By saint, by savage and by sage  
Jehovah, Jove or Lord,

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To thee whose temple is all space  
Whose altar, earth sea and skies  
One chorus let all beings raise  
All nature's incense rise.

# CIVILISATION AND ETHICS

*A Review\**

*By S. E. STOKES, Kotgarh.*

I have been carefully through Schweitzer, and with the deepest interest. The first volume seems to me of particular value. Doubtless, this is because it expresses what I have been feeling for a number of years with the greatest possible intensity. Humanity has got out of touch with life as a whole ; it has not seen and understood life in its entirety. Therefore, it has been attempting to subsist upon scraps and fragments. The tendency to specialisation has made those, who have devoted themselves to knowledge, content with details. I have been more and more impressed with the fact, that we can only make the most of life and the most of ourselves, if we have a definite conception of its significance.

Of course the limitations of human nature, make it impossible that we should apprehend the complete significance of the Self and Self-experience ; but what comes within the content of experience and is expressed to the Self in the terms of human nature, should be capable of right apprehension, though its ultimate implications are at many points necessarily hidden. We should be able to grasp enough to be able to read life as a page in the book of eternity—not as a jumble of disjointed and apparently disconnected fragments of sentences. It seems to me, that it is just because we have lost that view of the oneness of life,—of the vital and essential unity of it,—and of its significance, when apprehended as the timeless experienced in time and the inseparable experienced in individuality, that we wander so aimlessly and bring no fruit to perfection.

It has been this thought, which has practically impelled me to go into the silence and cut myself off from the excitement of those issues, which, when I devote attention to them, force to

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\**Philosophy of Civilisation by Albrecht Schweitzer.*

action. I cannot tell you with what imperativeness the feeling has taken possession of me, that all effort will attain to its true value only when humanity again regrasps its conviction, that life is a unity and, as a unity, has a meaning and a *paramārtha*. How can we—how can our race—advance, or indeed even hold its ground, if it is governed by vague sentiment and has lost faith in the time-less significance of the Self and the world of its experience? Surely Christ would have felt compassion for the men of this generation.

Such thoughts as these made me greatly appreciate the first volume of Schweitzer's *Philosophy of Civilisation*. In it he has expressed thoughts which are very real to me. His conviction, that without regaining a 'World-view' the civilisation of a race is bound to go to pieces, is a thought I have pondered over for years. All the time I was in jail was devoted to an attempt to find such a view; and the book I wrote there was entitled: *Thoughts on the Meaning of Life*. It is now so complete, that, though the form is not yet satisfactory to me, and I am working on that, still everything necessary is there, and if I should die to-morrow, it could be taken and put into shape by another.

However, to return to Schweitzer. I like his first volume immensely. The first part of the second volume also, in which he points out what he conceives to be the vital weaknesses of the various systems of western philosophic thought, is very suggestive. The latter part of the second volume, however, in which he develops his own method of approach to the problem of the meaning of things, did not seem to me to be of a nature that could carry us very far.

Of course, the feeling of reverence for and awe in the presence of life is an inspiring thought. I too have felt it and have felt impelled to the service even of the insects that he mentions. That I have felt it in another way and for different reasons than he, is quite natural; for I differ vitally from him in my conception of life's meaning. Still, I have that feeling of love and fellowship with all that is living, and am therefore perhaps not unfitted to appreciate the value of the attitude of mind that he advocates, as essential if civilisation is to survive.

There are various points where he does not satisfy me. We approach the problem differently. His view is a looking-outward; it seems to me that the meaning of the world—all experiencing—is to be found by looking inward. He seems to think of life as some thing which can be destroyed; it is a view that I cannot comprehend. His conceptions have to do with living men and living animals; to me it seems that we are dealing with the Self experiencing in terms of human and non-human nature. "We can only see" he says, "that all life eventually ceases to be"; my own experience is that as we enter deeper into the meaning of things, we apprehend that the prevailing conception of death is a misapprehension, based upon a misconception of the nature of life. Death is one of the illusions, and with it the fear of death.

Schweitzer's belief that life can be destroyed seems to me to lead him into an extraordinary position. In the ethic of 'reverence for life,' that he puts forward, "all destruction of and injury to life, from whatever circumstances they may result, are reckoned by it as an evil." He holds that, on one side is the ethical, and on the other the necessary; for he acknowledges that in the world it is impossible not to take life. We can none of us "cut ourselves off from the horrible necessity (of taking life) which plays ceaselessly round us". Yet necessary or not, it is evil. This really means that living in this world is of necessity opposed to the ethical, no matter how much we succeed in reducing the amount of life that we destroy; as a consequence, it is and must continue to be a compromise with evil. (pp. 263-5).

Holding this view, it is no wonder that he is convinced of "the impossibility of the attempt to understand the meaning of life in the meaning of the world". The interests of the world are opposed to those of life; it is a form of dualism.

Turning to the position upon which he feels that he must build, we find it summed up in: "I am life which wills to live; and I exist in the midst of life which wills to live"; the ethical corollary of which is: "I experience the necessity of practising the same reverence toward all wills-to-live as toward my own."

This ethic is, of course, the golden rule with its implications extended to include non-human animals and plants. The

postulate seems to me to be neither self-evident, nor fundamental. I experience the will-to-live without doubt. This is a fact of experience. But is it the deepest note of my experiencing life? Is it the dynamic factor impelling to the most profound experience? Am I not conscious, as the world of the experiencing self broadens and deepens, that mere will-to-live, in the sense in which Schweitzer appears to use the term,—a livingness that can be destroyed by physical causes,—holds by no means a primary place? So far as such life is concerned, there have been many who had a will-to-die. That is why I can not feel it to be really fundamental. In the lowest organism, it probably amounts to little more than an instinct to avoid pain. In the experience of the only Self we know at first hand—*our own*—it is neither the most dynamic factor nor the most vital experience which it knows. There are others which would make the Self toss aside 'life'—this thing that can be destroyed—without a moment's consideration.

I accept his second article : 'I exist in the midst of life that wills to live', because I am certain that I have found a basis for believing it. Yet as he seems to view life, it is surely a mere assumption which is unjustifiable, unless based upon more ultimate considerations. He states as a fact, what is not at all self-evident. At least, I presume he holds it as such, for he would hardly make it the foundation upon which to build up his world-view otherwise.

I gather my impression that he does not base his assertion upon more fundamental considerations, because of his constantly repeated assertions, that the interests of 'life' and of 'nature' are antagonistic. Life in the world is a horrible puzzle, in which man must live as ethically as grim necessity permits. To destroy life is ethically wrong under all circumstances : "All destruction of and injury to life, from whatever circumstances they result, are reckoned by it as evil". No wonder that a world in which the maintenance of life (or rather of the physiological state of livingness) is absolutely dependent upon its constant destruction in detail, shocks him.



Schweitzer seems to me to do what Sankara has so often warned us against,—to identify the self with its accidents; and this is what I feel has landed him into his present philosophic position. To me it is a hopeless one, and I pity Europe and America, if they are so starved that it can afford them an inspiration.

I too have felt reverence for life, and sympathy for the sufferings of animal and insect experience, but it was not for the sake of the animal or the insect nature, but of the Self experiencing through them. My feeling has made me too, for years, do the kind of things Schweitzer suggests, but never for a moment because I imagined that I could take or save *life*.

\* \* \*

### THE MEANING OF DEATH.

With the close of all those earthly relations, which we call by the name of Death, the merely human clothing of the experience of the Self, comes to an end also. The temporarily-real expressions of a deeper reality, the temporary instruments of that real longing, stretching out to find its wholeness in what is personal, pass out of the world of the experiencing Self; but the reality of the relationship remains stripped of its hitherto familiar *nām* and *rūp*, waiting to be clothed in higher forms fitted to deeper and broader experiences. The true need, and the true desire begotten of it, are real. They belong to the personal Self. The human expression was temporarily-real,—not more.

As the Chandhyoga Upanishat so beautifully says: “These are the true desires, with a covering of untruth. For, whoever departs from here, him one cannot see again in this world. Those of his, who are living and who are dead, and whatsoever else there is which, though desiring, one does not obtain,—all this one finds, when he goes There. There are all those true desires, covered by untruth”.

It is surely a precious lesson, that Death teaches, showing us how and where we tend to confuse those true desires with the clothing that is only real in a very temporary sense.

## NOTES

SOME PAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT'S TRAVEL DIARY.

(*translated.*)

S. S. Haruno Maru,  
24th September, 1924.

It is eight in the morning. Thick clouds in the sky overhead; the horizon hazy with rain; the damp wind, like a peevish child, never getting done with its fitful gusts. On the other side of the breakwater, the savage sea roars and leaps up, as if at some throat which it fails to reach. The sight of this rain-blurred frothing mass of speechlessness makes me think of some nightmare-ridden depth whose impotent emotions, stirred up by its bad dreams, rise crowding round its heart, its suffocated utterance finding vent in an agonised wail.

These signs of nasty weather, at the very start, make one's whole being wilt. Our intellect is modern and staunch; it refuses to acknowledge omens. But our blood is full of old time fears and anxieties which, like the waves beyond the enclosure, will not be quieted, and keep knocking against and leaping over our reasoned conclusions. The intellect has ensconced itself behind barriers of reason, out of touch with the inarticulate voices of the Universe. The blood has remained outside; on it falls the shadow of the clouds and the surge of far away billows; the piping of the wind makes it dance and its moods respond to the play of light and shade,—so that when the elements are unkind it cannot help being disconsolate.

I have often made journeys to distant lands, my mind never experiencing any difficulty in casting off from its mooring. This time, however, its anchor seems to have gripped fast. This shows that I am growing old. The refusal to move on is nothing but a form of mental miserliness; one becomes reluctant to spend, only when one's hoard is felt to be diminishing. Yet I know that this feeling of being held back will go off as soon as we have

left the harbour well behind. Then the young adventurer in me will revel in the open road and feel all the old keenness to take a peep behind the veil of the fair Unknown beyond the seas.

On the last occasion, when my invitation came from China, they expected from me words of wisdom,—clearly an invitation of grown ups. But from South America they have invited me to take part in their Centenary Festival. This allows me to travel light, for I have not to put on grown-up airs. The more I have to lecture, the more does my own vapouring hide the real me, for that is not my poet's function. The butterfly leaves the chrysalis by virtue of its own quality of life; the silk thread leaves the cocoon by dint of diverse mechanical processes, and thereupon the fate of the hapless butterfly is tragic.

I first went over to the United States when I was past middle age and great was the efficiency with which they managed to extract all my words from me. Ever since then I have been in requisition in the markets of useful words, and my recognition as poet has taken a back place. Up to my fiftieth year I spent in unofficial haunts of uselessness. And now, when according to Manu I should have retreated into the forest, I have got entangled in the web of utility. Verily is Saturn ascendant in the sky of my fate.

*25th September.*

All yesterday our Steamer went on loading her cargo. When at length she cast off in the night, the wind had abated somewhat, but the clouds were still swaggering about in massed formation. This morning a dismal dampness continues to blot out the sky. For me there is to be no sunny send off this time. And both in mind and body I am tired.

Our ship sails off with a bit of the world cut out of the shore life. On land there is room enough to keep spaces between man and man. Here we are crowded into compactness. And yet how difficult it is to get to know one another. This feeling overcasts my mind every time I sail,—this distancing of the intimate, this uncompanionable propinquity!

The habitations of early man had thin walls, with their wattle framework full of interstices, their doors of mat easy to

push open. As the designing of dwellings gained in expertness, masonry, wood and iron were requisitioned to make them impervious. Outside influences were barred out : inside habits and customs were fastened in. This privacy, which is needed for sitting and eating and dressing and sleeping in comfort, appears to be an essential appendage of civilisation itself, which is costing no end of trouble and expense to attain and maintain,—this barrier at every step to the free intercourse between the inside and the outside.

I admit that individual man needs a natural protective armour, such as Karna of the *Mahabharata* was endowed with by the Sun. Otherwise, if he is pressed into becoming merely one of a crowd, his precious gift of individuality tends to become futile. Man cannot properly express himself unless he secludes himself, just as the seed, before it can sprout, seeks shelter beneath the soil, the fruit puts on its covering of skin to screen its ripening. The barbarian neither has nor needs the full strength of individuality : with the progress of man's civilisation, are evolved all the barriers of personal privacy.

The mischief is that these barriers gradually assume an undue self-importance of their own. Then, by reason of the increasing impediments which come to block the way, the prime necessity of intercourse between man and man gets out of sight altogether. This exaggeration of the impediments is the calamity.

In what circumstances does this calamity overtake humanity? When, with an inordinately high standard of comfort, man's necessities are excessively multiplied, then he needs must become specially circumspect and calculating where any expenditure of time or trouble is involved for the sake of others. When he requires the production of endless material for his own living, the towns and cities which house the steeds of his desires grow to gigantic proportions. But it is only when the congregations of men are of reasonable dimensions that intimacy of relation is possible between individuals. And so village dwellers are not only closely related, but they form a unit. Vast cities have not been able to develop a heart centre strong enough to circulate the current of their life through all their numerous and complex

ramifications. Overgrown organisations are therefore only efficient in their output of work, not of human relations. The factory can do with thousands of workers, but the homeliness of home is lost if it is overcrowded. And so cities, while holding together their citizens with outward bonds, loosen all the while their inward ties.

We who have been brought up from childhood amidst the endless compartments of this civilisation, with their closed doors, and have lost the habit of intimacy, are now thrown close together within the confines of this ship. For those who tread the open road, on a common pilgrimage, it takes no time to come together, for they are villagers who are used to mingling with their fellows. But the passengers of steamships and railway trains, when they leave their city home, take the astral bodies of their walls along with them. Thus we find, when our college students, fired with a sudden urge of patriotism, rush off to do good to the villagers, they can but go up to them, but fail to get near. They talk through their accustomed bars, and their voice sounds as Greek to these simple folk.

But there is another side. Vigorously as the whirlpool of this civilisation draws us in, it has not taken off all our rusticity. We have learnt to talk of the value of time, but if someone else chooses to ignore that value, we have not the wherewithal to hold him at bay. One day I had retired to my room upstairs, feeling far from well and with work to do. Being of a naturally mild disposition, even this private room of mine is not inaccessible to my friends as well as to those who are otherwise. Fortunately the way to it is not known to all good citizens of this city. So word was sent up that a visitor was waiting to see me downstairs. I knew that being busy or unwell is no excuse in our country, so with a sigh I stopped my writing and stepped down.

I found an unknown youth, lying in wait for me, who lost no time in producing from within the folds of his shawl a thick looking MS. book. I understood I had to do with a fellow craftsman. "I have composed an opera," the young poet informed me. He must have noticed the pallor spreading over my countenance for he hastened to add: "I ask nothing much of you,—just to set tunes to the words of my songs, which are only

twenty-five." "Where's the time"? was all I could falter in reply. He assured me that it would not take much time as he reckoned half-an-hour for each song. "But I am not well," I then gasped in desperation, whereupon he still persisted, saying: "Oh, if you say that I—but—" It is thrilling to think of the denouement on which the curtain would have been rung down if the stage of this drama had been an English author's sanctum!

So, as I was saying, the closed door is a cruel fact of civilisation, but the absence of all privacy is sheer barbarism. Creation consists in the reconciliation of opposites: in their utter separation is chaos. Man forgets this and so gets punished over and over again.

*27th September.*

The clouds have altogether passed off to-day. A benign dispensation of light overspreads the sky; there is cordial invitation in everyone of the sun-lit ripples of the sea. I would fain not miss the least bit of this hospitality of the heavens, and am loath to spare any part of such a day for writing my diary.

Diary writing is miser's work,—the result of a desire not to waste anything, but to gather and hoard everyone of the day's happenings, big or small. The miser, as I said, does not move on, but remains brooding.

My creator has given me one great gift,—an inordinate faculty of forgetting. He has not put me in charge of his storeroom of facts; nor am I on duty as watchman,—it being my privilege, through the watches, to keep on dropping from my mind the burden of each passing period.

But, had such dropping out meant losing, my Master would never have made such a mistake. The Spring forgets everytime its circumstance of blossoming and lies distraught and empty-handed towards the bleakness of its end; but it is through this forgetfulness that the flowers find open the gateway to their new birth. My every-day life becomes difficult with the number of things which my uppermost mind forgets. But these things my surface-memory thus lets drop, only for them to be gathered in the green-room of the depth below, where they can find the means for ever-new changes of dress.

God has evidently fashioned my mind as a stage for drama, not a museum of events. And so the attempt to hoard is always a loss for me,—I gain by what I let go. When, through this process of passing out, something that was apparently lost is regained in another guise, it becomes difficult for me to stand cross-examination by any scientist of tenacious memory, for his keen analysis may make it appear that what I call new is but the old, that which I now call mine was some one else's. But this is just the playfulness of Creation itself,—that is why it is called *Māya*. If a stern sentry should insist on going through the pockets of the dewdrop, only two curious gases would be found, with tempers as fiery as their names are harsh. And yet the dewdrop remains wholesomely cool as ever, sweet as any teardrop shed by two mingling souls.

But the more one talks the more there is left to say. What I started to make out was that Diary writing is not in my line. I am a follower of Shiva, the absent-minded, and am not out to fill my beggar's bowl with gathered facts. If I absently allow any portion of the lake of my mind to evaporate, that ascends through invisible ways to gather as cloud in my sky,—else all my showering is at an end.

Besides, I am reluctant to measure all the truths of my individual life by one and the same authoritative standard. And yet it takes time to evolve special standards suited to special happenings, so that when an event does happen its true measure may not be available. Then what may seem big according to the recognised standard may really be small, and what we are led to think light may in truth be the weighty thing. It is only by a prolonged process of forgetting accidentals that we may attain the means of correctly appraising particular merit.

The excessively credible facts gathered from contemporaneous documents, on which writers of biographies base their work, are but rigid pieces of news which can neither be enlarged nor reduced. But Life itself progresses by a series of expansions and contractions of its daily events. A pile of those facts of extreme credibility may serve for building a memorial monument, but how can they make up the story of a life? If from Life's story the forgetfulness with which all life is instinct be

left out, of what good to us can be the deadness of the result? Had I been foolish enough to write a diary for each and every day, then would such false witness, borne under my own hand, have contradicted and mutilated the truth of my own life.

In the age when there were no reporters, newspapers not having been invented, man's natural faculty of forgetfulness met with no artificial check. That is how those times produced men of never-to-be-forgotten greatness. Now-a-days, we may gain any number of everyday great men at the hands of our keensighted, fact-pecking critics, but no more so easily such men of all time.

I have the fear that some day some future biographer, armed with a camera, may attempt to photograph that garden of our childhood's days, where Mother Nature every morning would smile up at me as she put right in my gladdened heart, decked out on her tray of blue, each day's sunrise as her special present. That matter-of-fact biographer would not even know that this garden of mine is only to be found there, where is the Garden of Eden in Paradise. The Artist who is sceptical about extra-credibly recorded facts may perchance find his way into that heaven, but never any camera-man; for is not its entrance guarded by the angel with a flaming sword?

*28th September.*

As we reached Colombo, every quarter of the sky was flooded with rain. When the home is desolate with the tears of some great sorrow, some profound loss, the guest ceases to have freedom of entry. The hospitality of Colombo's heavy-laden sky was thuswise constricted for me, lacking the warmth of welcome in which my mind could spread itself out. I kept wondering what evil star should have made so cold this first touch of the outside world whose invitation had brought me out. What if the door was open, where was the smile of greeting on the face of my host?

It was in the midst of this desponding day with its averted face that a letter from a Bengali maiden was handed to me. This was the same little maid who had asked me for a poem describing my sojourn at Shillong,—a request I had not been able



to bring myself to dishonour. Now she simply wished me *bon voyage*. This gave me heart, for I felt that the good wishes of this maid of Bengal would surely counteract the evil omen of the unpropitious elements.

Man has his bravery, woman her charm,—this is acknowledged in every country. To this we in India add, that Woman represents the Good. All those portions of our social ceremonies which betoken auspiciousness are in her charge. When setting out on any adventure we value the blessing of the mother more than that of the father, for we feel that, like perfume from the censor, the woman's prayer rises daily to heaven,—in the vermillion spot worn by the wife at the parting of her hair as a charm to fend her husband from all harm; in the sandal paste with which the sister decks her brother's forehead once a year to mark her ever-green remembrance of the joys and sorrows of her childhood's home; in her *ulu*-cry of rejoicing, her conch-blast of festivity; in the meaning of each one of her everyday ornaments; in her thousand and one expressed and suppressed anxieties. The love of woman not only makes us glad, but we feel therein our truest welfare.

This means that somehow we of India have come to the understanding that the thing called Love is not merely an affair of the heart, but a force as universal as that of gravitation. It is this Universal Force which the love of woman sets free. The power of love, inherent in Vishnu, wherewith He nurtures the Universe, is his beloved Lakshmi herself. The ideal of ours, which is embodied in Lakshmi, we find realised in our typical woman. The beauty which we behold in Lakshmi is that of perfect harmony: so long as in Creation the opposites are not reconciled, Beauty does not come into being.

This reconciliation man, in the pursuit of his path of work, has not yet arrived at,—perhaps will never attain. He is so busy making inroads into the unknown, that he cannot find the leisure to cry halt at any stage of fulfilment. The Creator has not put the last stroke of His brush in the making of man's character, so that man needs must be content with incompleteness.

But the being of woman is established in her own nature and she does not perilously have to venture forth to seek its fulfilment.

Some objective of animate nature has found in her its perfection. About her special functions Nature has no hesitations. Various is the wealth of creation, of nourishment, of joy, with which her body and mind are endowed.

In the creation of the body the function of man is but slight, so that he is gifted from birth with freedom from one great responsibility. And thus has he been enabled to take on himself the function of creation in the world of the mind. In the fields of literature and art, science and philosophy, morals and religion, this life-long truant from the workshop of physical life has thus been busy creating what we call civilisation. Whenever any obstacle arises in the way of the fertilising flow of the richly varied life-stream of woman's creation into the endeavour of man, mechanical degeneration overtakes his creations, and the resulting machines become instruments of torment for others as well as for himself.

This is the idea which has sought expression in my *Red Oleanders*. All the energy of the men of Yaksha Town is constantly engaged in the extraction of golden treasure from the depth of the earth, and the cruel greed of such constant endeavour has banished Beauty from their midst. There, in Yaksha Town, man cut himself off from the All, entangled in the complex network of his own contriving; forgetting that joy is of greater worth than gold; that fulfilment is not attainable through might, but only through love. Thereupon, by dint of his stupendous efforts for the enslavement of his fellow-men, Man kept himself enchained.

Meanwhile enters Nandini, the Woman. The impact of Life comes upon the Machine. The all-daring importunity of love attacks the network of bondage set up by struggling greed. How, at the insidious onslaught of this force of woman's love, man came to break the door of this prison of his own building, in a supreme attempt to liberate the stream of Life, is described in that play.

## THE GOD OF LOVE.

What is the ideal of the lover who has passed beyond the habit of bartering and bargaining and who knows no fear? Even to the great God such a man will say: "I have given you my all, and I do not want anything from you; indeed, there is nothing I can call my own." This grand ideal of the Religion of Love demands the worship of love absolutely as such, without the aid of any symbols or suggestions.

All the other forms of *Bhakti* are only stages on the way to reach this. Object after object is taken up, and his inner ideal successively projected on them by the *bhakta*, to find that all external objects are always inadequate as exponents of his ever-expanding inner ideal, and are thereupon cast aside by him, one after another.

And in course of time, the devotee acquires the power of realising the highest and the most generalised ideal, which to him, however, becomes quite alive and real. When he has reached this point, he is no longer impelled to ask whether God is omnipotent or omniscient, or not. To him, He is only the God of Love.

It is said by some that selfishness is the only motive power in regard to all human activities. In my opinion that also is love, lowered by being particularised. When I think of myself as a part of the universal Whole and love It, my love becomes universal also. But when I, by mistake, think that I am a little something, disconnected from the Whole, my love becomes particularised and narrowed.

This universal Whole is the God of the *bhaktas*, and all the other gods, books, doctrines, theories, have no purpose, no meaning for them; for, through their supreme love, they have risen above these things altogether. When the heart is cleansed and filled to the brim with the divine nectar of love, all other ideas of God except that He is Love become puerile and are rejected as inadequate or unworthy.

—Vivekānanda.

# VISVA-BHARATI BULLETIN

## I

From the Address by Dr. Sten Konow at the Varshika Parishat  
24th December 1924.

*(The address was in Sanskrit, followed by these few words in English).*

My friends, we bow down to-day in reverence to him to whom we owe the idea of the Visva-bharati. It is a poet's vision. To this home of peace (Santiniketan) men can come from every quarter of the globe in a common endeavour to promote mutual understanding and good will.

It is a poet's vision but it came at a time when men were in sore need. The Gospel of Jesus had proved powerless when people rose against people, and each of them in the name of the King of Peace, called upon men to take up arms. The Church invoked His name to support in turn the cause of each contending country. From the pulpit men were exhorted to kill one another.

The outlook in the West seemed hopeless when the Poet came and asked us to seek salvation through faith in new ideals. Wise men of the world smiled, but there were individuals who felt that there was yet hope for humanity. The Poet's vision must some day come true. The nations of the world must join hands in a common endeavour to build anew the history of the world.

I am waiting for such new development. It will not do to bring every country and every continent under European rule and European civilization. Asia, asleep for ages, must make her own contribution to the world culture. All the peoples of the world must come together working towards common ideals for the universal welfare.

There are differences and there are conflicts of interest and it would be idle to ignore them. But it is the endeavour of Visva-bharati to study them with a view to effect a reconciliation. Life is harmony, rich in variety. Death alone is uniform. The object of Visva-bharati is to achieve unity in diversity.

I take it to be a good omen that the Visva-bharati has been started in India. India has never attempted to conquer the world by force or violence. Millions in India have kept their faith in lofty ideals. Let us move forward inspired by the Spirit of India to fulfil the Poet's vision.

## II.

**A Brief Review of Early Chinese Literature.**

*By Ngo-Chang Lim, Visiting Professor to Visva-bharati from China.*

India has been known to us generally as Hsin 'Tu, the Kingdom of the Hindus, or Si Yu, the Western Land ; and among the Chinese Buddhists as Fu Kuo, the land of the Buddhas, or as Si-t'ien, the West Heaven ; which epithets will serve to give you an idea of the mental attitude of the Chinese towards this country, which is in marked contrast to the dislike or contempt which they felt for the other countries round China ; the tribes to the North being called Hsing-Nu, or Hun slaves, those to the North-West and South-West simply Barbarians. To the East the Japanese were called Dwarf Pirates on account of their occasional attacks on our coast line.

Our first contact with India, as everyone knows, was through religion, resulting in religious intercourse and not commercial or political relationship. This epoch-making event took place when Kashyapamadanya visited China in the year 67 of the Christian Era, bearing with him images and scriptures. Both he and his companion were received with favour by the Chinese Emperor, Ming Ti, who built for them the White Horse temple. The teaching of Buddhism has continued to flow from then to the present time, and has permeated our religious as well as our daily life. Even our women and uncultured people are in the habit of using Buddhist phrases, without however being aware of their origin.

Besides these lofty religious ideals from which millions of weary souls in China, from rulers down to peasants, found inspiration and consolation, we gradually came to acquire a knowledge of Philology, Astronomy, Medicine and other branches of learning through the Indian priests and Chinese pilgrims. Sanskrit was taken as a model for a Chinese phonetic system which was called Ba-la-men Shu, or Brahmanical writing. Especially notable was the devotion of the Chinese pilgrims, Fah-hien, Hsiün-chang and a number of others, who did not shrink from undertaking the weary and dangerous journey to India. The overland route to India from China is strewn with the white bones of many such pilgrims, who died on their way through the intense heat of the desert, or the extreme cold of the snowy passes.

Fah-hien has told us that it took him six years to reach Central India

from North China by land, and three years to return by sea. And he tells us how in 413 A.D. he was nearly shipwrecked in the Bay of Bengal, when his boat encountered a storm and was found to be leaking. He threw everything overboard to lighten the ship, but clung to the books and images he was taking back with him, his prayer for safety showing evidently more anxiety for these than for his own life!

If, through this first auspicious contact in the past, we have been sharing common beliefs and a common culture with you, it is all the more incumbent on those of us who now follow in the footsteps of those Indian and Chinese pilgrim pioneers, torchbearers of the light of truth, love and peace, to see that this cultural bond is progressively strengthened.

The ability of Asia to solve her own problems, to achieve her own salvation as well as to share her light with the rest of the world, would not only be a blessing to the various Asiatic peoples, but to the world at large. Both India and China had once reached the zenith of their development, but since then both of them have come to a period of stagnation, of what scientists call arrested growth. Nations that have once begun to decline must sooner or later be wiped out of existence to make place for more vigorous peoples, unless a period of re-birth and diligent self-realisation follows.

India, China and Japan have awakened but, with perhaps the exception of Japan, the consequences of their re-awakening have not yet become fully apparent. It is my hope that India and China will take a different course from that of Japan in their future endeavours and struggles, and present to the world a better picture of peace. Let the innate gifts of peace and love for all humanity, which are a feature of these peoples steeped in long ages of culture, overflow from the hearts of the two great Asiatic countries. It would indeed be terrible if these two nations, between them comprising about one-third of the world's population and one-fourth of that of Asia, were to develop along aggressive lines. Blind patriotism is as undesirable as servile submission.

It is with these thoughts in my mind that I felt the desire to visit this country, in which I arrived with the humble spirit of a pilgrim. On the day after my landing, when I first saw the Bodhi trees, I was overcome with emotion. "What!" I cried, "Can these really be the Bodhi trees mentioned in our Chin Kang-ching, the Diamond Classic?" When I was coming over the Ganges, thronged with the devotees bathing in its holy waters, the same emotion overwhelmed me. The Ganges is known

to us as Heng Ho, or the Constant River, and rouses in us the same religious feeling as it does in the Buddhists of India. "Numberless as the sands of the Ganges" is a common phrase in the mouth of every Chinese.

To come back to my point, I come to this place because I hope to learn more about your country and take back what I learn to my own people. I hope also to convey to you, during my sojourn here, some of the more characteristic thoughts of our ancient and modern thinkers and also to give some account of the present social political and economical developments in China. I may further be of assistance to those of you who desire to be acquainted with our language in order to gain direct access to our literature.

Those who know the colossal output of Chinese literature during the long period which it has covered, will agree with me that it is impossible to deal with the whole of it, even in the barest outline, without running into volumes. What is more, there never has been compiled any history of Chinese Literature in the Western sense, nor has any systematic attempt been made to place these voluminous materials in chronological order. All our classification has been according to subject matter. I therefore propose to take this opportunity of placing before you only a few of its features.

Just to give you an idea of dimensions and arrangements let me mention two or three encyclopedias compiled during the Ming and the Ch'ing dynasties, which have become sources of systematic reference for our scholars. The biggest literary achievement of China is the Yung Lê Ta-tien compiled during the reign of the Ming Emperor, Ch'ing Chu, and completed in 1407 A. D. This huge encyclopoedia consists of 22,877 sections which are bound up in 11,000 volumes, its Table of Contents alone occupying 60 books. Owing to the prohibitive expenditure that would be entailed, it has never been printed. It had three transcripts, two of which perished at Nanking with the fall of the Ming dynasty, and part of the third was destroyed in Peking, at the entry of the Allied troops in 1900, when the Hamlin Library was set on fire. Some of these books have found their way to Europe and America.

The Yung Lê Ta-tien has four main divisions: (1) the Confucian Canons (2) History (3) Philosophy and (4) General literature, including both Buddhism and Taoism. Some three thousand scholars were assembled at the Capital by special command, where they spent five years over its compilation. All kinds of books were collected and sent over from every corner of the Empire by royal agents and the governors of provinces, in

addition to voluntary loans from private libraries, for comparison and compilation.

This was soon followed, under the succeeding Emperor, Ying Tsung, by the compilation of a "Complete geographical Record of the Empire." This set consists of ninety volumes and is regarded as one of the celebrated works in Chinese Literature.

The Sze-k'u Ch'ien-shu, edited in the time of Kang-hsi, next deserves mention. This Encyclopaedia of Learning is arranged much in the same way as the Yung I-ch'ien, but is by no means a revised or condensed edition of its predecessor. This also has four divisions, *viz.* (1) The Ching or Classic (2) The Shih or Historical (3) The Tz'u, comprising various schools of thought and (4) The Tsi, or Literary. The whole set runs to 5,026 sections, bound up in 1,628 octavo volumes of about 200 pages each.

When I was in Peking I had the curiosity to make a count of the different volumes dealing with different subjects. I found, to give some instances, that in the Classic division there are 114 volumes of texts, commentaries and notes on the books of Ch'un Ch'iu, or Annals of Spring and Autumn, a historical work composed by Confucius. On classical music there are 21 volumes. On Etymology and Philology there are 478 sections in 36 volumes. On Phonetics there are 388 sections in 33 volumes.

In the General Literature division there are numerous books on Religion. Among them is the Kai-Yuan, Buddhist records; comprising 20 volumes, by a noted Buddhist scholar, Tsê-sheng, of Tang dynasty. He gives a detailed account of Buddhism since its introduction into China, and of the Buddhist scriptures. There are 3 volumes of "New Books on the Enlightened Virtues," edited by Ch'ao Hui, in the Sung dynasty, largely based on the teachings of Buddha and Confucius, and exhorting men to be virtuous. It is interesting to note that this author, while characterising both Confucianism and Buddhism as sublime, distinguished the former as "refined" and the latter as "comprehensive."

Another set of books in this encyclopaedia of K'ang-hsi is the Fu chu t'ung Tsai, or General Records of the Buddhist Patriarchs, in 22 volumes, by Nien Hsiang of the Yuan dynasty. This gives a chronological record of the rise and fall of the various sects of Buddhism. It is in these and similar books that one gets the earlier references to India.

The Emperor K'ang-hsi, under whose orders this encyclopaedia, the Sze K'u Chuen Shu, was compiled and completed in the 47th year of his reign, was himself a lexicographer and a well-read Chinese scholar. The



Chinese Standard Dictionary has been named after him the K'ang-hsi Dictionary.

These are some of the materials in which students of Sinology will find an inexhaustible fund of enlightenment and inspiration. It may be of interest to note here that much is to be found in the volumes on Chinese history and literature that will throw light on the history, institutions and customs of neighbouring countries as well. For instance, a European professor in Burma has recently been writing a history of Burma, for the earlier materials of which he has, curiously enough, had to fall back upon Chinese sources.

Now that I have given some idea of the sources, let me touch upon some of the more conspicuous figures of their times for the purposes of my rough sketch.

Like other countries we also had our Mythological Age. P'an Ku, the Chinese Atlas, was believed to be the first living being on earth, through whom was accomplished the arduous task of chiselling out the earth from chaos. This will probably strike you, as it struck me, as being analogous to the allegory of Vishnu, the preserver, raising the world from the flood. It took our P'an Ku 18,000 years to complete his gigantic architectural work. After a long period following this, we come across another figure, also an architect, but not cast in so heroic a mould. This was You Ch'ao who taught men how to build houses, for before then they had been living in caves. Then came Sui Jên, the producer of fire, who like Prometheus taught his fellow men how to make a fire, his method being to rub together two pieces of wood. These myths, though they cannot be taken seriously from a historical standpoint, serve to give us a glimpse of how the Chinese mind came to apprehend the origin of things.

This was followed by a Legendary Age, in which there were admittedly five patriarchs, who did much for Chinese civilisation. The first of these was Fu Hsi (2852 B. C.). To him has been ascribed the invention of the Pa-kwa, or mysterious eight diagrams, a symbolic series on which was based a mystic philosophy. Though considerable credence may be attached even to the symbolic records of the earlier part of this period, we only touch firm ground when we come to the period when writing was invented. This came about in the reign of Huang Ti, the Yellow Emperor. It was one of his courtiers, Ch'ang Chieh, who observing the shapes and lines of natural objects and of animals, first conceived the idea of forming written characters.

Passing over these earlier patriarchs we come to the times of the Emperors Yao, Shun and Yü, the three rulers whose names were immortalised by Confucius and Mencius. In the writings of Confucius we find mention of these in *Shu-king*, the Book of History, which records the main incidents in the reigns of some eighteen rulers of China, beginning with the three named above. On Yü, the third, fell the heavy responsibility of coping with a terrible inundation that devastated a great part of the then existing Kingdom. Though Chinese scholars used to regard the history of this period with great reserve, closer study has established the fact of this inundation being due to the overflow of the Hwang Ho River along which the early Chinese dwelt, by reference to the occurrence of an eclipse of the sun mentioned in *Shi-king*, the Book of Odes, for the heavenly movements were very carefully recorded by the historians and regarded with awe by rulers and people alike.

From this period of legends and semi-legends we come to the period of Lao-tzû and Confucius, Moti and Chuang-tzû, during which time Chinese Literature really began to take definite shape. We may say that this period commenced somewhere about 600 B. C. for Lao-tzû was born in the beginning of Chou Nig Wang's time, or about 570 B.C.; and Confucius some 20 years after. For this there is ample documentary and textual evidence. These two names are well known throughout the civilised world, and portions of their work are familiar to scholars of every cultured nation. So here I need make only a few observations.

In Lao-tzû's works we often come across startling and revolutionary ideas; then again we also find a strong belief in quietude, and in the inability of institutions, social or political, to bring true peace. The cause of disorder in the societies of man is the development by him of the unnatural and the artificial. The only effective remedy is a return to Nature, or the Tao as it was called by Lao-tzû, who was a contemporary of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle in the West.

Confucius, on the other hand, aimed at the teaching of right conduct to men, from rulers down to peasants. He formulated a social code for all to observe. Benevolence, Righteousness and Universal Love,—these are his watchwords. The object of Confucius, as we gather from his writings, was to improve existing conditions, rather than to set up anything new. He never allowed himself to be drawn into talk about a future world, or about the soul, or departed spirits. He was too much occupied with the thought of the welfare of living men.

We cannot overlook, even in this brief sketch, one fact that influenced the thoughts of these early thinkers. The revolutionary ideas of Lao-tzû, and the peaceful tenets of Confucius, were alike the reflections of their time and of the period immediately preceding. Our history tells us that during the two or three hundred years immediately before their appearance, China had been distracted with constant petty warfare. She was also frequently menaced by the periodical attacks of the northern Tartars, from which the people suffered severely.

It is therefore only natural that Lao-tzû should get tired of the intrigues and political scheming of the rulers of his time, and so preach a course of inactivity which he believed would be more conducive to real happiness. On occasion he is found to wax indignant at the injustice wrought on the people by their rulers, whereupon he would rebuke them with the fierce denunciation of a revolutionary. For example he says: "The people are starved because of your heavy taxation ; the people are hard to govern because you are overdoing your government ; the people defy death because they are eager to live. Since they are not afraid to die, why threaten them with death?" He also says: "The more laws you make, the more robbers and thieves you will find."

Here is what Confucius says about the formation of Character in young men: "A youth should be filial at home and respectful abroad. He should be earnest and truthful ; he should overflow in love to all, but cultivate friendship for the good ; then devote his spare energy to the improvement of his mind." About learning he says: "Learning without thought is labour lost. Thought without learning is intellectual death." About contentment he says: "Riches and honours are what men desire ; yet, except in accordance with Right, these should not be enjoyed. Poverty and degradation are what men dread ; yet, except in accordance with Right, these should not be avoided." And on his disciples inquiring about the spirits of the departed, Confucius answers. "You are not even able to serve living men, how then should you serve departed spirits?" Further, on being asked about death, he repeats: "You do not even understand life, how then should you understand death?"

With Lao-tzû and Confucius we close this period of Early Chinese Literature.



The object is a large, dark, irregularly shaped mass, possibly a piece of debris or a large rock. It has a rough, textured surface and is oriented vertically. The object is shown against a light background.

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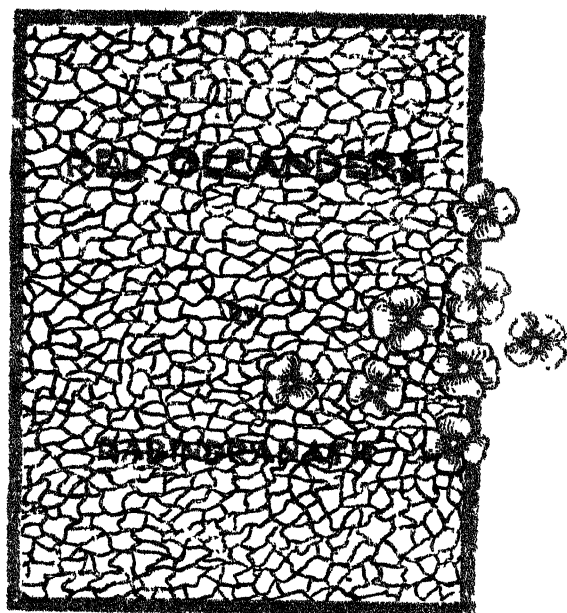
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*Special Sharadiya (Autumn) Number*

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# RED CLEANDERS

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To  
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# RED OLEANDERS.

A DRAMA IN ONE ACT.

**The Curtain rises on a window covered by a network of intricate pattern in front of the Palace.**



*[Nandini and Kishôr, a digger boy, come in.]*

**Kishôr :**

Have you enough flowers, Nandini? Here, I have brought some more.

**Nandini :**

Run away, Kishôr, do,—back to your work, quick !  
You'll be late again.

**Kishôr :**

I must steal some time from my digging and digging of nuggests to bring out flowers to you.

**Nandini :**

But they'll punish you, my boy, if they know.

**Kishôr :**

You said you *must* have red oleanders. I am glad they're hard to find in this place. Only one tree I discovered after days of search, nearly hidden away behind a rubbish heap.

**Nandini :**

Show it me. I'll go and gather the flowers myself.

**Kishôr :**

Don't be cruel, Nandini. This tree is my one secret which none shall know. I've always envied Bishu, he can sing to you songs that are his own. From now I shall have flowers which you'll have to take only from my hands.

**Nandini :**

But it breaks my heart to know that those brutes punish you.

**Kishôr :**

It makes these flowers all the more precious mine.  
They come from my pain.

**Nandini :**

It pains me to accept anything which brings you hurt.

**Kishôr :**

I dream of dying one day for your sake, Nandini.

**Nandini :**

Is there nothing I can give you in return?

**Kishôr :**

Promise that you will accept flowers only from me every morning.

**Nandini :**

I will. But do be careful.

**Kishôr :**

No, no, I shall be rash and defy their blows. My homage shall be my daily triumph.

[*Goes*].

[*Professor comes in.*]

**Professor :**

Nandini !

**Nandini :**

Yes, Professor !

**Professor :**

Why do you come and startle one, now and again, and then pass by? Since you awaken a cry in our hearts, what harm if you stop a moment in answer to it? Let us talk a little.

**Nandini :**

What need have you of me?

**Professor :**

If you talk of need, look over there!—You'll see our tunnel-diggers creeping out of the holes like worms, with loads of things of need. In this Yaksha Town all our treasure is of gold, the secret treasure of the dust. But the gold which is you, beautiful one, is not of the dust, but of the light which never owns any bond.

**Nandini :**

Over and over again you say this to me. What makes you wonder at me so, Professor?

**Professor :**

The sunlight gleaming through the forest thickets surprises nobody, but the light that breaks through a cracked wall is quite a different thing. In Yaksha Town, you are this light that startles. Tell me, what d'you think of this place?

**Nandini :**

It puzzles me to see a whole city thrusting its head underground, groping with both hands in the dark. You dig tunnels in the underworld and come out with dead wealth that the earth has kept buried for ages past.

**Professor :**

The *Jinn* of that dead wealth we invoke. If we can enslave him the whole world lies at our feet.



**Nandini :**

Then again, you hide your king behind a wall of netting. Is it for fear of people finding out that he's a man?

**Professor :**

As the ghost of our dead wealth is fearfully potent so is our ghastly royalty, made hazy by this net, with its inhuman power to frighten people.

**Nandini :**

All you say is a kind of made-up talk.

**Professor :**

Of course made-up. The naked is without a credential, it's the made-up clothes that define us. It delights me immensely to to discuss philosophy with you.

**Nandini :**

That's strange! You who burrow day and night in a mass of yellow pages, like your diggers in the bowels of the earth,—why waste your time on me?

**Professor :**

The privilege of wasting time proves one's wealth of time. We poor drudges are insects in a hole in this solid toil, you are the evening star in the rich sky of leisure. When we see you, our wings grow restless. Come to my room. For a moment allow me to be reckless in my waste of time.

**Nandini :**

No, not now. I have come to see your king, in *his* room.

**Professor :**

How can you enter through the screen?

**Nandini :**

I shall find my way through the net-work.

**Professor :**

Do you know, Nandini I too live behind a net-work of scholarship. I am an unmitigated scholar, just as our king is an unmitigated king.

**Nandini :**

You are laughing at me, Professor. But tell me, when they brought me here, why didn't they bring my Rañjan also?

**Professor :**

It's their way to snatch things by fractions. But why should you want to drag your life's treasure down amongst this dead wealth of ours?

**Nandini :**

Because I know he can put a beating heart behind these dead ribs.

**Professor :**

Your own presence is puzzling enough for our governors here ; if Rañjan also comes they will be in despair.

**Nandini :**

They do not know how comic they are,—Rañjan will bring God's own laughter in their midst and startle them into life.

**Professor :**

Divine laughter is the sunlight that melts ice, but not stones. Only the pressure of gross muscle can move our governors.

**Nandini :**

My Rañjan's strength is like that of your river, Sankhini,—it can laugh and yet it can break. Let me tell you a little secret news of mine. I shall meet Rañjan to-day.

**Professor :**

Who told you that?

**Nandini :**

Yes, yes, we shall meet. The news has come.

**Professor :**

Through what way could news come and yet evade the Governor?

**Nandini :**

Through the same way that brings news of the coming Spring.

**Professor :**

You mean it's in the air,—like the rumours which flush in the colour of the sky, or flutter in the dance of the wind?

**Nandini :**

I won't say more now. When Rañjan comes you'll see for yourself how rumours in the air come down on earth.

**Professor :**

Once she begins to talk of Rañjan there's no stopping Nandini's mouth! Well, well, I have my books, let me take my shelter behind them,—I dare not go on with this.

*[Coming back after going a little way]*

Nandini, let me ask you one thing. Aren't you frightened of our Yaksha Town?

**Nandini :**

Why should I feel afraid?

**Professor :**

All creatures fear an eclipse, not the full sun. Yaksha Town is a city under eclipse. The Shadow Demon, who lives in the gold caves, has eaten into it. It is not whole itself, neither does it allow any one else to remain whole. Listen to me, don't stay here. When you go, these pits will yawn all the wider for us, I know,—yet I say to you, fly; go and live

happily with Rañjan where people in their drunken fury don't tear the earth's veil to pieces.

[*Going a little way and then coming back*]

Nandini, will you give me a flower from your chain of red oleanders?

**Nandini :**

Why, what will you do with it?

**Professor :**

How often have I thought that there is some omen in these ornaments of yours.

**Nandini :**

I don't know of any.

**Professor :**

Perhaps your fate knows. In that red there is not only beauty, but also the fascination of fear.

**Nandini :**

Fear! Even in me?

**Professor :**

I don't know what event you have come to write with that crimson tint. There was the gardenia and the tuberose, there was white jasmine,—why did you leave them all and choose this flower? Do you know, we often choose our own fate thus, without knowing it!

**Nandini :**

Rañjan sometimes calls me Red Oleander. I feel that the colour of his love is red,—that red I wear on my neck, on my breast, on my arms.

**Professor :**

Well, just give me one of those flowers,—a moment's gift,—let me try to understand the meaning of its colour.

**Nandini :**

Here, take it. Rañjan is coming to-day,—out of my heart's delight I give it to you.

[*Professor goes*]

[*Gôkul, a digger, comes in*].

**Gôkul :**

Turn this way, woman! Who are you? I've never yet been able to understand you.

**Nandini :**

I'm nothing more than what you see. What need have you to understand me?

**Gôkul :**

I don't trust what I can't understand. For what purpose has the King brought you here?

**Nandini :**

Because I serve no purpose of his.

**Gôkul :**

You know some spell, I'm sure. You're snaring everybody here. You're a Witch! Those who are bewitched by your beauty will come to their death.

**Nandini :**

That death will not be yours, Gôkul, never fear!  
You'll die digging.

**Gôkul :**

Let me see, let me see, what's that dangling over your forehead?

**Nandini :**

Only a tassel of red oleanders.

**Gôkul :**

What does it mean?

**Nandini :**

It has no meaning at all.

**Gôkul :**

I don't believe you, one bit ! You're up to some trickery. Some evil will befall us before the day is out. That's why you have got yourself up like this. Oh you terrible, terrible witch !

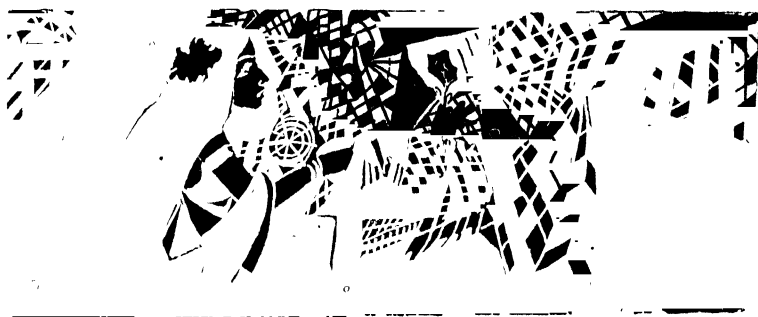
**Nandini :**

What makes you think me so terrible ?

**Gôkul :**

You're looking like an ominous torch with a red flame. Let me go and warn these fools.—Beware ! Beware !

[*He goes*]



**Nandini** (*knocking at the net-work*) :

Do you hear me ?

**A voice** (*from behind the scenes*) :

I hear you. But don't call me,—I have no time.

**Nandini :**

Let me come inside. My heart is full to-day.

**Voice :**

No, not into my room.

**Nandini :**

I have brought you a garland of white *kunda* flowers.

**Voice :**

Wear it yourself.

**Nandini :**

My own garland is of red oleanders.

**Voice :**

I am like a mountain peak, my bareness is my adornment.

**Nandini :**

Like waterfalls running down the peak, this white flower-chain will sway on your breast. Open the netting, I want to come in.

**Voice :**

I can't allow it. There's no time.

**Nandini :**

Don't you hear that song in the distance?

**Voice :**

What are they singing?

**Nandini :**

The autumn song :

Hark, 'tis Autumn calling :

"Come, O, come away!"—

Her basket is heaped with corn.

Don't you see the September sun is spreading the glow of the ripening corn in the air?

Drunken with the perfumed wine of wind,  
the sky seems to sway among the shivering corn,  
its sunlight trailing on the fields.

You too come out, King!—out into the fields.

**Voice :**

Fields! What could I do there?

**Nandini :**

The work there is much simpler than your work in Yaksha Town.

**Voice :**

It's the simple which is impossible for me. A lake cannot run out dancing, like a frolicsome waterfall. Leave me now, I have no time.

**Nandini :**

The day you let me into your store-house the blocks of gold did not surprise me,—what amazed me was the immense strength with which you lifted and arranged them. But can blocks of gold ever answer to the swinging rhythm of your arms in the same way as fields of corn? Are you not afraid, King, of handling the dead wealth of the earth?

**Voice :**

What is there to fear?

**Nandini :**

The living heart of the earth gives itself up in love and life and beauty, but when you rend its bosom and disturb the dead, you bring up with your booty the curse of its dark demon, blind and hard, cruel and envious. Don't you see everybody here is either angry, or suspicious, or afraid?

**Voice :**

Curse?

**Nandini :**

Yes, the curse of grabbing and killing.

**Voice :**

But we bring up strength. Does not my strength please you, Nandini?

**Nandini :**

Indeed it does. Therefore I ask you, come out into the light, step on the ground, let the earth be glad.

**Voice :**

Do you know, Nandini, you too are half-hidden behind an evasion,—your mystery of beauty! I want to pluck you out of it, to grasp you within my closed fist, to handle you, scrutinise you,—or else to break you to pieces.



**Nandini :**

Whatever do you mean?

**Voice :**

Why can't I strain out the tint of your oleanders and build a dream out of it to keep before my eyes? Those few frail petals guard it and hinder me. Within you there is the same hindrance, so strong because so soft. Nandini, will you tell me what you think of me?

**Nandini :**

Not now, you have no time. Let me go.

**Voice :**

No, no, don't go. Do tell me what you think of me.

**Nandini :**

Have I not told you often enough? I think you are wonderful. Strength swelling up in your arms, like rolling clouds before a storm,—it makes my heart dance within me.

**Voice :**

And when your heart dances to see Rañjan, is that also——

**Nandini :**

Let that be,—you have no time.

**Voice :**

There is time,—for this; only tell me, then go.

**Nandini :**

That dance rhythm is different, you won't understand.

**Voice :**

I will, I *must* understand.

**Nandini :**

I can't explain it clearly. Let me go.

**Voice :**

Tell me, at least, whether you like me.

**Nandini :**

Yes, I like you.

**Voice :**

The same as Rañjan?

**Nandini :**

Again the same question ! I tell you, you don't understand these things.

**Voice :**

I *do* understand, a little. I know what the difference is between Rañjan and me. In me there is only strength, in Rañjan there is magic.

**Nandini :**

What d'you mean by magic?

**Voice :**

Shall I explain ? Underground there are blocks of stone, iron, gold,—there you have the image of strength. On the surface grows the grass, the flower blossoms,—there you have the play of magic. I can extract gold from the fearsome depths of secrecy, but to wrest that magic from the near at hand I fail.

**Nandini :**

You have no end of things, yet why always covet?

**Voice :**

All I possess is so much dead weight. No increase of gold can create a particle of a touchstone, no increase of power can ever come up to youth. I can only guard by force. If I had Rañjan's youth I could leave you free and yet hold you fast. My time is spent in knotting the binding rope, but, alas, everything else can be kept tied, except joy.

**Nandini :**

It is you who entangle yourself in your own net, then why keep on fretting?

**Voice :**

You will never understand. I, who am a desert, stretch out my hand to you, a tiny blade of grass, and cry : I am parched, I am bare, I am weary. The flaming thirst of this desert licks up one fertile field after another, only to enlarge itself,—it can never annex the life of the frailest of grasses.

**Nandini :**

One would never think you were so tired.

**Voice :**

One day, Nandini, in a far off land, I saw a mountain as weary as myself. I could not guess that all its stones were aching inwardly. One night I heard a noise, as if some giant's evil dream had moaned and moaned and suddenly snapped asunder. Next morning I found the mountain had disappeared in the chasm of a yawning earthquake. That made me understand how overgrown power crushes itself inwardly by its own weight. I see in you something quite opposite.

**Nandini :**

What is it you see in me?

**Voice :**

The dance rhythm of the All.

**Nandini :**

I don't understand.

**Voice :**

The rhythm that lightens the enormous weight of matter. To that rhythm the bands of stars and planets go about dancing from sky to sky, like so many minstrel boys. It is that rhythm, Nandini, that makes you so simple, so perfect. How small you are compared to me, yet I envy you.

**Nandini :**

You have cut yourself off from everybody and so deprived yourself.

**Voice :**

I keep myself apart, that it may become easy for me to plunder the world's big treasure-houses. Nevertheless there are gifts that your little flower-like fingers can easily reach, but not all the strength of my body,—gifts hidden in God's closed hand. That hand I must force open some day.

**Nandini :**

When you talk like that, I don't follow you. Let me go.

**Voice :**

Go then ; but here, I stretch out this hand of mine from my window, place your hand on it for a moment.

**Nandini :**

Only a hand, and the rest of you hidden? It frightens me!

**Voice :**

Everybody flies from me because they only see my hand.

But if I wished to hold you with all of me, would you come to me, Nandini?

**Nandini :**

Why talk like this when you wouldn't even let me come into your room?

**Voice :**

My busy time, overloaded with work, dragged along against obstruction, is not for you. On the day when you can arrive, full sail before the wind, into the bosom of my full leisure, the hour of welcome will strike. Even if that wind be a storm, all will be well. That hour is not yet come,

**Nandini :**

Rañjan will bring that delightful wind here, I tell you. He carries his holiday-time with him, even in his work.

**Voice :**

He has the red wine of oleanders to fill up his cup. But to me you want to pass on an empty leisure. Where is the wine?

**Nandini :**

Let me go now.

**Voice :**

Answer me first.

**Nandini :**

How to fulfil leisure you will learn from Rañjan. He is so beautiful.

**Voice :**

Beauty only responds to beauty. Its lute strings break when force tries to snatch an answer. But no more of this. Go, go away, or else there will be trouble.

**Nandini :**

I go. But I tell you, my Rañjan is coming to-day. You cannot prevent him.

[*She goes*]



[*Phágulal, the digger, and his wife Chandrá, come in.*]

**Phágulal :**

My bottle, Chandrá? Out with it!

**Chandrá :**

What! Drink from early morning?

**Phágulal :**

Isn't it our holiday? Yesterday was the fast day of the War Goddess. To-day they worship the Flag.

**Chandrá :**

Must you drink just because it's a holiday? In our village home, on feast days, you never——

**Phágulal :**

Freedom itself was enough for the holidays in our village. The caged bird spends its holiday knocking against the bars. In Yaksha Town holidays are more of a nuisance than work.

**Chandrá :**

Let's go back home, then.

**Phágulal :**

The road to our home is closed for ever.

**Chandrá :**

How's that?

**Phágulal :**

Our homes don't yield them any profit.

**Chandrá :**

But are we closely fitted to their profits only,—  
like husks to grains of corn,—with nothing  
of us left over?

**Phágulal :**

Our mad Bishu says : to remain whole is useful  
only for the lamb itself; those who eat it  
prefer to leave out its horns and hooves, and  
even object to its bleating when butchered.  
There's the madcap, singing as he goes.

**Chandr :**

It's only the last few days that his songs have burst forth.

**Ph g l :**

That's true.

**Chandr :**

He's been possessed by Nandini. She draws his heart and his songs too.

**Ph g l :**

No wonder.

**Chandr :**

Indeed! You'd better be careful. She'll next be bringing out songs from *your* throat,—which would be rough on our neighbours. The witch is up to all kinds of tricks, and is sure to bring misfortune.

**Ph g l :**

Bishu's misfortune is nothing recent, he knew Nandini long before coming here.

**Chandr :**

(*Calling out*) I say, Bishu, come this way. May be you'll find somebody here also to listen to your singing,—it won't be altogether thrown away.

[*Bishu comes in, singing*]

**Bishu (*sings*):**

Boatman of my dreams,  
The sail is filled with a boisterous breeze  
and my mad heart sings  
to the lilt of the rocking of thy boat,  
at the call of the far away landing.

**Chandr :**

I know who the boatman of your dreams is.

**Bishu :**

How should you know from outside? You haven't seen from inside my boat.

**Chandrá :**

Your boat is going to get wrecked one of these days, let me tell you,—by that pet Nandini of yours.

[*Gôkul, the digger, comes in*]

**Gôkul :**

I say Bishu, I don't quite trust your Nandini.

**Bishu :**

Why, what has she done?

**Gôkul :**

She does nothing, that's the rub. I don't understand the way she goes on.

**Chandrá :**

To see her flaunting her prettiness all over the place makes me sick.

**Gôkul :**

We can trust features that are plain enough to understand.

**Bishu :**

I know the atmosphere of this place breeds contempt for beauty. There must be beauty even in hell; but nobody there can understand it, that's their cruellest punishment.

**Chandrá :**

May be we are fools, but even our Governor here can't stand her—d'you know that?

**Bishu :**

Take care, Chandrá, lest you catch the infection of our Governor's eyes—then perhaps yours too will redden at the sight of us. What say you, Phágulal?



**Phágulal :**

To tell you the truth, brother, when I see  
Nandini, I feel ashamed to think of myself.  
I can't utter a word when she's there.

**Gôkul :**

The day will come when you'll know her to your  
cost,—perhaps too late.

[*Goes*]

**Phágulal :**

Bishu, your friend Chandrá wants to know why  
we drink.

**Bishu :**

God in his mercy has everywhere provided a  
liberal allowance of drink. We men with our  
arms supply the output of our muscles, you  
women with yours supply the wine of  
embraces. In this world there is hunger to  
force us to work; but there's also the green  
of the woods, the gold of the sunshine, to  
make us drunk with their holiday-call.

**Chandrá :**

You call these things *drink*?

**Bishu :**

Yes, drinks of life, an endless stream of intoxica-  
tion. Take my case. I come to this place;  
I am set to work burgling the underworld;  
for me nature's own ration of spirits is  
stopped; so my inner man craves the artificial  
wine of the market place.

(*Sings*)

My life, your sap has run dry,  
Fill then the cup with the wine of death,  
That flushes all emptiness with its laughter.

**Chandrá :**

Come, brother, let us fly from here.

**Bishu :**

To that boundless tavern, underneath the blue canopy? Alas, the road is closed, and we seek consolation in the stolen wine of the prison house. No open sky, no leisure for us; so we have distilled the essence of all the song and laughter, all the sunlight of the twelve hours' day into one draught of liquid fire.

*(Sings)*

Thy sun is hidden amid a mass of murky cloud.  
Thy day has smudged itself black in dusty toil.  
Then let the dark night descend  
the last comrade of drunken oblivion.  
Let it cover thy tired eyes with the mist  
that will help thee desperately to lose  
thyself.

**Chandrá :**

Well, well, Bishu, you men have gone to the dogs in Yaksha Town, if you like, but we women haven't changed at all.

**Bishu :**

Haven't you? Your flowers have faded, and you are all slaving for gold.

**Chandrá :**

No, never !

**Bishu :**

I say, yes. That Phágulal toils for hours over and above the twelve,—why? For a reason unknown to him, unknown even to you. But I know. It's your dream of gold that lashes him on to work, more severely than the foreman's whip.

**Chandrá :**

Very well. Then why don't we fly from here, and go back home?

**Bishu :**

Your Governor has closed the way as well as the will to return. If you go there to-day you will fly back here tomorrow, like a caged bird to its cage, hankering for its drugged food.

**Phágulal :**

I say, Bishu, once upon a time you came very near spoiling your eyesight poring over books ; how is it they made you ply the spade along with the rest of us stupid boors ?

**Chandrá :**

All this time we've been here, we haven't got from Bishu the answer to this particular question.

**Phágulal :**

Yet we all know it.

**Bishu :**

Well, out with it then !

**Phágulal :**

They employed you to spy on us.

**Bishu :**

If you knew that, how is it you let me off alive ?

**Phágulal :**

But, we knew also, that game was not in your line.

**Chandrá :**

How is it you couldn't stick to such a comfortable job, brother ?

**Bishu :**

Comfortable job ? To stick to a living being like a carbuncle on his back ?

I said : "I must go home, my health is failing." "Poor thing," said the Governor, "how can you go home in such a state ? However, there's no harm in your trying."

Well, I did try. And then I found that, as soon as one enters the maw of Yaksha Town its jaws shut fast, and the one road that remains

open leads withinwards. Now I am swamped in that interior without hope and without light, and the only difference between you and me is, that the Governor looks down upon me even worse than upon you. Man despises the broken pot of his own creation more than the withered leaf fallen from the tree.

**Phágulal :**

What does that matter, Bishu? You have risen high in our esteem.

**Bishu :**

Discovery only means death. Where your favour falls there falls the Governor's glance. The more noisily the yellow frogs welcome the black toad, the sooner their croaking points him out to the boa-constrictor.

**Chandrá :**

But when will your work be finished?

**Bishu :**

The calendar never records the last day. After the first day comes the second, after the second the third. There's no such thing as getting finished here. We're always digging—one yard, two yards, three yards. We go on raising gold nuggets,—after one nugget another, then more and more and more. In Yaksha Town figures follow one another in rows and never arrive at any conclusion. That's why we are not men to them, but only numbers.—Phágu, what's yours?

**Phágulal :**

I'm No. 47 V.

**Bishu :**

I'm 69 Ng.

**Chandrá :**

Brother, they've hoarded such heaps of gold, can't they stop digging now?

**Bishu :**

There's always an end to things of need, no doubt ;  
so we stop when we've had enough to eat.  
But we don't need drunkenness, therefore  
there's no end to it. These nuggets are the  
drink—the solid drink—of our Gold King.  
Don't you see?

**Chandrá :**

No, I don't.

**Bishu :**

Cups in hand, we forget that we are chained to  
our limits. Gold blocks in hand, our master  
fancies he's freed from the gravitation of the  
commonplace, and is soaring in the rarest of  
upper heights.

**Chandrá :**

In this season the villages are preparing for their  
harvest festival. Let's go home.

**Phágulal :**

Don't worry me, Chandra. A thousand times  
over have I told you that in these parts there  
are high roads to the market, to the burning  
ground, to the scaffold,—everywhere except  
to the homeland.

**Chandrá :**

If we were to go to the Governor, and just  
tell him——

**Bishu :**

Hasn't your woman's wit seen through the  
Governor yet?

**Chandrá :**

Why he seems to be so nice and——

**Bishu :**

Yes, nice and polished, like the crocodile's teeth,  
which fit into one another with so thorough a  
bite that the King himself can't unlock the  
jaw, even if he wants to.

**Chandrá :**

There comes the Governor.

**Bishu :**

Then it's all up with us. He's sure to have overheard——

**Chandrá :**

Why, we haven't said anything so very——

**Bishu :**

Sister, we can only say the words,—they put in the meaning.

[*The Governor comes in.*]

**Chandrá :**

Sir Governor !

**Governor :**

Well, my child ?

**Chandrá :**

Grant us leave to go home for a little.

**Governor :**

Why, aren't the rooms we have given you excellent, much better than the ones at home ? We have even kept a state watchman for your safety. Hullo, 69 Ng, to see you amongst these people reminds one of a heron come to teach paddy birds how to cut capers.

**Bishu :**

Sir, your jesting does not reassure me. Had my feet the strength to make others dance, would I not have run away from here, first thing ? Especially after the striking examples I've seen of the fate that overtakes dancing masters in this country. As things are, one's legs tremble even to walk straight.

**Chandrá :**

Give us leave, Sir Governor, do give us leave. Let us go just for once, and see our waving

fields of barleycorn in the ear, and the ample shade of our banian tree with its hanging roots. I cannot tell you how our hearts ache. Don't you see that your men here work all day in the dark, and in the evening steep themselves in the denser dark of drunkenness? Have you no pity for them?

**Governor :**

My dear child, surely you know of our constant anxiety for their welfare. That is exactly why I have sent for our High Preacher, Kenarám Gosain himself, to give moral talks to the men. Their votive fees will pay for his upkeep. Every evening the Gosain will come and——

**Phágulal :**

That won't do, sir! Now, at worst, we get drunk of an evening, but if we are preached to every night, there'll be manslaughter!

**Bishu :**

Hush, hush, Phágulal.

[*Preacher Gosain comes in*]

**Governor :**

Talk of the Preacher and he appears. Your Holiness, I do you reverence. These workmen of ours sometimes feel disturbed in their weak minds. Deign to whisper in their ears some texts of peace. The need is urgent.

**Gosain :**

These people? Are they not the very incarnation of the sacred Tortoise of our scripture, that held up the sinking earth on its back? Because they meekly suppress themselves underneath their burden, the upper world can keep its head aloft. The very thought sends a thrill through my body!

Just think of it friend 47 V, yours is the duty of supplying food to this mouth which chants the holy name. With the sweat of your brow have you woven this wrap printed with the holy name, which exalts this devoted body. Surely that is no mean privilege. May you remain for ever undisturbed, is my benediction, for then the grace of God will abide with you likewise.

My friends, repeat aloud the holy name of Hari, and all your burdens will be lightened. The name of Hari shall be taken in the beginning, in the middle, and at the end,—so say the scriptures.

**Chandrā :**

How sweet ! It's long since I have heard such words ! Give, oh give me a little dust off your feet !

**Phágulal :**

Stop this waste of money, Governor. If its our offerings you want, we can stand it, but we're fairly sick of this cant.

**Bishu :**

Once Phágulal runs amok it's all over with the lot of you. Hush, hush, Phágulal !

**Chandrā :**

Are you bent on spoiling your chances both in this world and the next, you wretched man ? You were never like this before. Nandini's ill wind has blown upon you,—and no mistake.

**Gosain :**

What charming naïveté, Sir Governor ! What's in their heart is always on their lips. What can we teach them ?—it's they who'll teach us a lesson. You know what I mean.

**Governor :**

I know where the root of the trouble is. I'll have



to take them in hand myself, I see. Meanwhile, pray go to the next parish and chant them the holy name,—the sawyers there have taken to grumbling, somewhat.

**Gosain :**

Which parish did you say?

**Governor :**

Parish T-D. No : 71 T is headman there. It ends to the left of where No : 65 of Row M lives.

**Gosain :**

My son, though Parish T-D may not yet be quieted, the whole Row of M's have lately become steeped in a beautiful spirit of meekness. Still it is better to keep an extra police force posted in the parish some time longer. Because, as you know our scripture says,—pride is our greatest foe. After the strength of the police has helped to conquer pride, then comes our turn. I take my leave.

**Chandrá :**

Forgive these men, Your Holiness, and give them your blessing, that they may follow the right path.

**Gosain :**

Fear not, good woman, they'll all end thoroughly pacified.

[*The Gosain goes*]



**Governor :**

I say 69 Ng, the temper of your parish seems to be somewhat strained.

**Bishu :**

That's nothing strange. The Gosain called them the incarnation of the Tortoise. But, according to scripture, incarnations change; and, when the Tortoise gave place to the Boar, in place of hard shell came out aggressive teeth, so that all-suffering patience was transformed into defiant obstinacy.

**Chandrá :**

But, Sir Governor, don't forget my request.

**Governor :**

I have heard it and will bear it in mind.

[*He goes*]

**Chandrá :**

Ah now, didn't you see how nice the Governor is?  
How he smiles everytime he talks!

**Bishu :**

Crocodile's teeth begin by smiling and end by biting.

**Chandrá :**

Where does his bite come in?

**Bishu :**

Don't you know he's going to make it a rule not to let the workmen's wives accompany them here.

**Chandrá :**

Why?

**Bishu :**

We have a place in their account book as numbers, but women's figures do not mate with figures of arithmetic.

**Chandrá :**

O dear! but have they no womenfolk of their own?

**Bishu :**

Their ladies are besotted with the wine of gold,  
even worse than their husbands.

**Chandrá :**

Bishu, you had a wife at home,—What's become  
of her?

**Bishu :**

So long as I filled the honored post of spy, they  
used to invite her to those big mansions to play  
cards with their ladies. Ever since I joined  
Phágulal's set, all that was stopped, and she  
left me in a huff at the humiliation.

**Chandrá :**

For shame ! But look, brother Bishu, what a grand  
procession ! One palanquin after another !  
Don't you see the sparkle of the jewelled  
fringes of the elephant-seats ? How beautiful  
the out-riders on horse-back look, as if they  
had bits of sunlight pinned on the points of  
their spears !

**Bishu :**

Those are the Governor's and Deputy Governor's  
ladies, going to the Flag-worship.

**Chandrá :**

Bless my soul, what a gorgeous array and how fine  
they look !

I say, Bishu, if you hadn't given up that job, would  
you have gone along with that set in this grand  
style?—and that wife of yours, surely——

**Bishu :**

Yes, we too should have come to just such a pass.

**Chandrá :**

Is there no way going back,—none whatever ?

**Bishu :**

There is,—through the gutter.

**A distant voice :**

Bishu, my mad one !

**Bishu :**

Yes, my mad girl !

**Phágulal :**

There's Nandini. There'll be no more of Bishu  
for us, for the rest of the day.

**Chandrá :**

Tell me, Bishu, what does she charm you with ?

**Bishu :**

The charm of sorrow.

**Chandrá :**

Why do you talk so topsy-turvy ?

**Bishu :**

She reminds me that there are sorrows, to forget  
which is the greatest of sorrow.

**Phágulal :**

Please to speak plainly, Bishu, otherwise it becomes  
positively annoying !

**Bishu :**

The pain of desire for the near belongs to the  
animal, the sorrow of aspiration for the far  
belongs to man. That far away flame of my  
eternal sorrow is revealed through Nandini.

**Chandrá :**

Brother, we don't understand these things. But  
one thing I do understand and that is,—the  
less you men can make out a girl, the more  
she attracts you ! We simple women,—our  
price is not so high, but we at least keep you  
on the straight path. I warn you, once for  
all, that girl with her noose of red oleanders  
will drag you to perdition.

*[Chandra and Phagulal go]*

[*Nandini comes in*]

**Nandini :**

My mad one, did you hear their autumn songs this morning?

**Bishu :**

Is my morning like yours that I should hear singing? Mine is only a swept-away remnant of the weary night.

**Nandini :**

In my gladness of heart I thought I'd stand on the rampart and join in their song. But the guards would not let me, so I've come to you.

**Bishu :**

I am not a rampart.

**Nandini :**

You are *my* rampart. When I come to you I seem to climb high, I find the open light.

**Bishu :**

Ever since coming to Yaksha Town the sky has dropped out of my life. I felt as if they had pounded me in the same mortar with all the fractions of men here, and rolled us into a solid lump.

Then you came and looked into my face in a way that made me sure some light could still be seen through me.

**Nandini :**

In this closed fort a bit of sky survives only between you and me, my mad one.

**Bishu :**

Through that sky my songs can fly towards you.

(*Sings*)

You keep me awake that I may sing to you,

O Breaker of my sleep!

And so my heart you startle with your call,

O Waker of my grief!

The shades of evening fall,  
the birds come to their nest.  
The boat arrives ashore,  
yet my heart knows no rest,  
O Waker of my grief!

**Nandini :**

The waker of your grief, Bishu?

**Bishu :**

Yes, you are my messenger from the unreachable shore. The day you came to Yaksha Town a gust of salt air knocked at my heart.

**Nandini :**

But I never had any message of this sorrow of which you sing.

**Bishu :**

Not even from Rañjan?

**Nandini :**

No, he holds an oar in each hand and ferries me across the stormy waters; he catches wild horses by the mane and rides with me through the woods; he shoots an arrow between the eyebrows of the tiger on the spring, and scatters my fear with loud laughter. As he jumps into our Nagai river and disturbs its current with his joyous splashing, so he disturbs me with his tumultuous life. Desperately he stakes his all on the game and thus has he won me.

You also were there with us, but you held aloof, and at last something urged you one day to leave our gambling set. At the time of your parting you looked at my face in a way I could not quite make out. After that I've had no news of you for long. Tell me where you went off to then.

**Bishu :**

My boat was tied to the bank ; the rope snapped ;  
the wild wind drove it into the trackless  
unknown.

**Nandini :**

But who dragged you back from there to dig for  
nuggets here in Yaksha Town ?

**Bishu :**

A woman. Just as a bird on the wing is brought  
to the ground by a chance arrow, so did she  
bring me down to the dust. I forgot myself.

**Nandini :**

How could she touch you ?

**Bishu :**

When the thirsty heart despairs of finding water  
it's easy enough for it to be deluded by a  
mirage, and driven in barren quest from  
desert to desert.

One day, while I was gazing at the sunset clouds,  
she had her eye upon the golden spire of the  
Governor's palace. Her glance challenged  
me to take her over there. In my foolish  
pride I vowed to do so. When I did bring her  
here, under the golden spire, the spell was  
broken.

**Nandini :**

I've come to take you away from here.

**Bishu :**

Since you have moved even the king of this place,  
what power on earth can prevent you ? Tell  
me, don't you feel afraid of him ?

**Nandini :**

I did fear him from outside that screen. But now  
I've seen him inside.

**Bishu :**

What was he like ?

**Nandini :**

Like a man from the epics,—his forehead like the gateway of a tower, his arms the iron bolts of some inaccessible fortress.

**Bishu :**

What did you see when you went inside?

**Nandini :**

A falcon was sitting on his left wrist. He put it on the perch and gazed at my face. Then, just as he had been stroking the falcon's wings, he began gently to stroke my hand. After a while he suddenly asked: "Don't you fear me, Nandini?"

"Not in the least," said I.

Then he buried his fingers in my unbound hair and sat long with closed eyes.

**Bishu :**

How did you like it?

**Nandini :**

I liked it. Shall I tell you how? It was as if he were a thousand year old banyan tree, and I a tiny little bird; when I lit on a branch of his and had my little swing, he needs must have felt a thrill of delight to his very marrow, I loved to give that bit of joy to that lonely soul.

**Bishu :**

Then what did he say?

**Nandini :**

Starting up and fixing his spear-point gaze on my face, he suddenly said: "I want to know you."

I felt a shiver run down my body and asked: "what is there to know?—I am not a manuscript!"



"I know all there is in manuscripts," said he, "but I don't know you." Then he became excited and cried : "Tell me all about Rañjan. Tell me how you love him."

I talked on : "I love Rañjan as the rudder in the water might love the sail in the sky, answering its rhythm of wind in the rhythm of waves."

He listened quietly, staring like a big greedy boy. All of a sudden he startled me by exclaiming : "Could you die for him?"

"This very moment" I replied.

"Never," he almost roared, as if in anger.

"Yes, I could," I repeated.

"What good would that do you?"

"I don't know," said I.

Then he writhed and shouted : "Go away from my room, go, go at once, don't disturb me in my work."

I could not understand what that meant.

**Bishu :**

He gets angry when he can't understand.

**Nandini :**

Bishu, don't you feel pity for him?

**Bishu :**

The day when God will be moved to pity for him, he will die.

**Nandini :**

No, no, you don't know how desperately he wants to live.

**Bishu :**

You will see this very day what his living means. I don't know whether you'll be able to bear the sight.

**Nandini :**

There, look, there's a shadow. I am sure the Governor has secretly heard what we've been saying.

**Bishu :**

This place is dark with the Governor's shadow, it is everywhere. How do you like him?

**Nandini :**

I have never seen anything so lifeless,—like a cane stick cut from the cane bush,—no leaves, no roots, no sap in the veins.

**Bishu :**

Cut off from life, he spends himself in repressing life.

**Nandini :**

Hush, he will hear you.

**Bishu :**

He hears even when you are silent, which is all the more dangerous. When I am with the diggers I am careful in my speech, so much so that the Governor thinks I'm the sorriest of the lot, and spares me out of sheer contempt. But, my mad girl, when I am with you my mind scorns to be cautious.

**Nandini :**

No, no, you must not court danger. There comes the Governor.



[*The Governor comes in.*]

**Governor :**

Hallo, 69 Ng! you seem to be making friends with everybody, without distinction.

**Bishu :**

You may remember that I began by making friends even with you, only it was the distinction that stood in the way.

**Governor :**

Well, what are we discussing now?

**Bishu :**

We are discussing how to escape from this fortress of yours.

**Governor :**

Really? So recklessly, that you don't even mind confessing it?

**Bishu :**

Sir Governor, it doesn't need much cleverness to know that when a captive bird pecks at the bars it's not in the spirit of caress. What does it matter whether that's openly confessed or not?

**Governor :**

The captives' want of love we were aware of, but their not fearing to admit it has become evident only recently.

**Nandini :**

Won't you let Rañjan come?

**Governor :**

You will see him this very day.

**Nandini :**

I knew that; still, for your message of hope I wish you victory. Governor, take this garland of *kunda* flowers.

**Governor :**

Why throw away the garland thus, and not keep it for Rañjan?

**Nandini :**

There is a garland for him.

**Governor :**

Aha, I thought so! I suppose it's the one hanging round your neck. The garland of victory may be of *kunda* flowers, the gift of the hand; but the garland of welcome is of red oleanders, the gift of the heart. Well, let's be quick in accepting what comes from the hand, for that will fade; as for the heart's offering, the longer it waits the more precious it grows.

[*The Governor goes*]

**Nandini :**

(*Knocking at the window*) Do you hear? Let me come into your room.

**Voice** (*from behind the scenes*) :

Why always the same futile request? Who is that with you? A pair to Rañjan?

**Bishu :**

No, King, I am the obverse side of Rañjan, on which falls the shadow.

**Voice :**

What use has Nandini for you?

**Bishu :**

The use which music has for the hollow of the flute.

**Voice :**

Nandini, what is this man to you?

**Nandini :**

He's my partner in music. My heart scars in his voice, my pain cries in his tunes,—that's what he tells me.

(Sings)

"I love, I love,"—'Tis the cry that breaks out  
from the bosom of earth and water.

**Voice :**

So that's your partner ! What if I dissolved your  
partnership this very minute ?

**Nandini :**

Why are you so cross ? Haven't you any com-  
panion yourself ?

**Voice :**

Has the midday sun any companion ?

**Nandini :**

Well, let's change the subject. What's that ?  
what's that in your hand ?

**Voice :**

A dead frog.

**Nandini :**

What for ?

**Voice :**

Once upon a time this frog got into a hole in a  
stone, and in that shelter it existed for three  
thousand years. I have learnt from it the  
secret of continuing to exist, but to live it does  
not know. To-day I felt bored and smashed  
its shelter. I've thus saved it from existing  
for ever. Isn't that good news ?

**Nandini :**

Your stone walls will also fall away from around  
me to-day,—I shall meet Rañjan.

**Voice :**

I want to see you both together.

**Nandini :**

You won't be able to see from behind your net.

**Voice :**

I shall let you sit inside my room.

**Nandini :**

What will you do with us?

**Voice :**

Nothing, I only want to know you.

**Nandini :**

When you talk of knowing, it frightens me.

**Voice :**

Why?

**Nandini :**

I feel that you have no patience with things that cannot be known, but can only be felt.

**Voice :**

I dare not trust such things lest they should play me false. Now go away, don't waste my time.—No, no, wait a little. Give me that tassel of red oleanders which hangs from your hair.

**Nandini :**

What will you do with it?

**Voice :**

When I look at those flowers it seems to me as if the red light of my evil star has appeared in their shape. At times I want to snatch them from you and tear them to pieces. Again I think that if Nandini were ever to place that spray of flowers on my head, with her own hands, then——

**Nandini :**

Then what?

**Voice :**

Then perhaps I might die in peace.

**Nandini :**

Some one loves red oleanders and calls me by that name. It is in remembrance of him that I wear these flowers.

**Voice :**

Then, I tell you, they're going to be *his* evil star  
as well as *mine*.

**Nandini :**

Don't say such things, for shame ! I am going.

**Voice :**

Where?

**Nandini :**

I shall go and sit near the gate of your fort.

**Voice :**

Why?

**Nandini :**

When Rañjan comes he'll see I am waiting for  
him.

**Voice :**

I should like to tread hard on Rañjan and grind him  
in the dust.

**Nandini :**

Why pretend to frighten me?

**Voice :**

Pretend, you say? Don't you know I am really  
fearsome?

**Nandini :**

You seem to take pleasure in seeing people  
frightened at you. In our village plays  
Srikantha takes the part of a demon; when he  
comes on the stage, he is delighted if the  
children are terrified. You are like him. Do  
you know what I think?

**Voice :**

What is it?

**Nandini :**

The people here trade on frightening others.  
That's why they have put you behind a net-

work and dressed you fantastically. Don't you feel ashamed to be got up like a bogey-man?

**Voice :**

How dare you !

**Nandini :**

Those whom you have scared all along will one day feel ashamed to be afraid. If my Rañjan were here, he would have snapped his fingers in your face, and not been afraid even if he died for it.

**Voice :**

Your impudence is something great. I should like to stand you up on the top of a heap of everything I've smashed throughout my life. And then——

**Nandini :**

Then what?

**Voice :**

Then, like a squeezed bunch of grapes with its juice running out from between the gripping fingers, if I could but hold you tight with these two hands of mine,—and then—go, go, run away, at once, at once !

**Nandini :**

If you shout at me so rudely, I'll stay on, do what you will !

**Voice :**

I long savagely to prove to you how cruel I am. Have you never heard moans from inside my room?

**Nandini :**

I have. Whose moaning was it?

**Voice :**

The hidden mystery of life, wrenched away by me, bewails its torn ties. To get fire from a tree



you have to burn it. Nandini, there is fire within you too, red fire. One day I shall burn you and extract that also.

**Nandini :**

Oh, you are cruel !

**Voice :**

I must either gather or scatter. I can feel no pity for what I do not get. Breaking is a fierce kind of getting.

**Nandini :**

But why thrust out your clenched fist like that ?

**Voice :**

Here, I take away my fist. Now fly, as the dove flies from the shadow of a hawk.

**Nandini :**

Very well, I will go, and not vex you any more.

**Voice :**

Here, listen, come back, Nandini !

**Nandini :**

What is it ?

**Voice :**

On your face, there is the play of life in your eyes and lips ; at the back of you flows your black hair, the silent fall of death. The other day when my hands sank into it they felt the soft calm of dying. I long to sleep with my face hidden inside those thick black clusters. You don't know how tired I am !

**Nandini :**

Don't you ever sleep ?

**Voice :**

I feel afraid to sleep.

**Nandini :**

Let me sing you the latest song that I've learnt

(Sings)

"I love, I love" is the cry that breaks out  
from the bosom of earth and water.  
The sky broods like an aching heart,  
the horizon is tender like eyes misted with tears.

**Voice :**

Enough ! Enough ! stop your singing !

**Nandini :**

(Sings on)

A lament heaves and bursts  
on the shore of the sea,  
The whispers of forgotten days  
are born in new leaves to die again.

See, Bishu, he has left the dead frog there and  
disappeared. He is afraid of songs.

**Bishu :**

The old frog in his heart yearns to die when it  
hears singing, that's why he feels afraid.  
My mad girl, why is there a strange light on  
your face to-day, like the glow of a distant  
torch in the sky.

**Nandini :**

News has reached me, Rañjan is coming to-day.

**Bishu :**

How ?

**Nandini :**

Let me tell you. Every day a pair of blue-throats\*  
come and sit on the pomegranate tree in front  
of my window. Every night, before I sleep,  
I salute the pole star and say : Sacred star of  
constancy, if a feather from the wings of the  
blue-throats finds its way into my room, then  
I will know my Rañjan is coming. This

---

\**Nīlkantha*, a bird of good omen.

morning, as soon as I woke, I found a feather on my bed. See, here it is under my breast-cloth. When I meet him I shall put this feather on his crest.

**Bishu :**

They say, blue-throats' wings are an omen of victory.

**Nandini :**

Rañjan's way to victory lies through my heart.

**Bishu :**

No more of this ; let me go to my work.

**Nandini :**

I shan't let you work to-day.

**Bishu :**

What must I do then ?

**Nandini :**

Sing that song of waiting.

**Bishu :**

*(Sings)*

He who ever wants me through the ages,—  
is it not he who sits to-day by my wayside?  
I seem to remember a glimpse I had of his face,  
in the twilight dusk of some ancient year.  
Is it not he who sits to-day by the wayside?

**Nandini :**

Bishu, when you sing I cannot help feeling that I owe you much, but have never given anything to you.

**Bishu :**

I shall decorate my forehead with the mark of your never-giving, and go my way. No little-giving for me, in return for my song !  
Where will you go now ?

**Nandini :**

To the wayside by which Rañjan is coming.

[*They go*].



[*The Governor and a Headman come in*]

**Governor :**

No, we can't possibly allow Rañjan to enter this parish.

**Headman :**

I put him to work in the tunnels of Vajragarh.

**Governor :**

Well, what happened?

**Headman :**

He said he was not used to being made to work. The Headman of Vajragarh came with the police, but the fellow doesn't know what fear is. Threaten him, he bursts out laughing. Asked why he laughs, he says solemnity is the mask of stupidity and he has come to take it off.

**Governor :**

Did you set him to work with the diggers?

**Headman :**

I did, I thought that pressure would make him yield. But on the contrary it seemed to lift the pressure from the diggers' minds also. He cheered them up, and asked them to have a digger's dance !

**Governor :**

Digger's dance ! What on earth is that ?

**Headman :**

Rañjan started singing. Where were they to get drums?—they objected. Rañjan said, if there weren't any drums, there were spades enough. So they began keeping time with the spades, making a joke of their digging up of nuggets. The Headman himself came over to reprimand them. "What style of work is this?" he thundered.

"I have unbound the work" said Rañjan "It won't have to be dragged out by main force any more, it will run along of itself, dancing."

**Governor :**

The fellow is mad, I see.

**Headman :**

Hopelessly mad. "Use your spade properly," shouted I. "Much better give me a guitar," said he smiling.

**Governor :**

But how did he manage to escape from Vajragarh and come up here ?

**Headman :**

That I do not know. Nothing seems to fasten on to him. His boisterousness is infectious. The diggers are getting frisky.

**Governor :**

Hallo, isn't that Ranjan himself,—going along the road, thrumming on an old guitar ? Impudent rascal ! He doesn't even care to hide.

**Headman :**

Well, I never ! Goodness alone knows how he broke  
through the wall !

**Governor :**

Go and seize him instantly ! He must not meet  
Nandini in this parish, for anything.

*[Enter Assistant Governor]*

Where are you going ?

**Assistant Governor :**

To arrest Rañjan.

**Governor :**

Where is the Deputy Governor ?

**Assistant Governor :**

He is so much amused by this fellow that he doesn't  
want to lay hands on him. He says the man's  
laugh shows us what queer creatures we  
governors have grown into.

**Governor :**

I have an idea. Don't arrest Rañjan. Send him  
on to the King's sanctum.

**Assistant Governor :**

He refuses to obey our call, even in the King's  
name.

**Governor :**

Tell him the King has made a slave-girl of his  
Nandini.

**Assistant Governor :**

But if the King——

**Governor :**

Don't you worry. Come on, I'll go with you myself.

*[They go]*

*[Enter Professor and Antiquarian.]*

**Antiquarian :**

I say, what is this infernal noise going on inside ?

**Professor :**

The King, probably in a temper with himself, is engaged in breaking some of his own handiwork.

**Antiquarian :**

It sounds like big pillars crashing down one after another.

**Professor :**

There was a lake, at the foot of our hill over there, in which the waters of this Sankhini river used to gather. One day, suddenly, the rock to its left gave way, and the stored-up water rushed out laughing like mad. To see the King now-a-days, it strikes me that his treasure lake has grown weary of its rock wall.

**Antiquarian :**

What did you bring me here for, Professor ?

**Professor :**

Latterly he has begun to get angry with my science. He says it only burgles through one wall to reveal another behind it, and never reaches the inner chamber of the Life spirit. I thought that, perhaps in the study of antiquity, he might explore the secret of Life's play. My knapsack has been rifled empty, now he can go on pocket-picking history.

Do you see who that is passing by ?

**Antiquarian :**

A girl wearing a grass-green robe.

**Professor :**

She has for her mantle the green joy of the earth. That is our Nandini. In this Yaksha Town there are governors, foremen, headmen, tunnel-diggers, scholars like myself ; there are policemen, executioners, and undertakers,—altogether a beautiful assortment ! Only *she*

is out of element. Midst the clamour of the market place she is a tuned-up lyre. There are days when the mesh of my studies is torn by the sudden breeze of her passing by, and through that rent my attention flies away *swish*, like a bird.

**Antiquarian :**

Good heavens, man ! Are even your well-seasoned bones subject to these poetic fits ?

**Professor :**

Life's attraction, like the tidal wave, tears away mind from its anchorage of books.

**Antiquarian :**

Tell me, where am I to meet the King ?

**Professor :**

There's no means of meeting him. You'll have to talk to him from outside this net-work.

**Antiquarian :**

We're to converse with this net between us ?

**Professor :**

Not the kind of whispered talk that may take place through a woman's veil, but solidly concentrated conversation. Even the cows in his stall don't dare to give milk, they yield their butter straight off !

**Antiquarian :**

Admirable ! To extract the essential from the diluted, is what scholars aim at.

**Professor :**

But not what God in his creation aims at. He respects the fruit stones that are hard, but rejoices in the plup that is sweet.

**Antiquarian :**

Professor, I see that your grey science is galloping fast towards grass-green. But I wonder how you can stand this King of yours.



**Professor :**

Shall I tell you the truth? I love him.

**Antiquarian :**

You don't mean to say so?

**Professor :**

He is so great that even what is wrong with him  
will not be able to spoil him.

[*The Governor comes in.*]

**Governor :**

I say, man of science, so this is the person you  
volunteered to bring here. Our King flew into  
a passion at the very mention of his special  
subject.

**Antiquarian :**

May I ask why?

**Governor :**

The King says there is no age of history which may  
be called old. It is always an eternal extension  
of the present.

**Antiquarian :**

Can the front exist without the back?

**Governor :**

What he said was : "Time proceeds by revealing  
the new on his front ; but the men of learning,  
suppressing that fact, will have it that Time  
ever carries the burden of the old on his back."

[*Nandini comes in hurriedly.*]

**Nandini :**

What is happening? Who are they?

**Governor :**

Hallo, Nandini, is that you? I shall wear your  
*kunda* chain late in the evening. When three-  
quarters of me can hardly be seen for the dark,  
then perchance a flower garland might become  
even me.

**Nandini :**

Look over there—what a piteous sight ! Who are those people, going along with the guards, filing out from the back door of the king's apartments ?

**Governor :**

We call them the king's leavings.

**Nandini :**

What does that mean ?

**Governor :**

Some day you too will know its meaning ; let it be for to-day.

**Nandini :**

But are these men ? Have they flesh and marrow, life and soul ?

**Governor :**

May be they haven't.

**Nandini :**

Had they never any ?

**Governor :**

May be they had.

**Nandini :**

Where then is it all gone now ?

**Governor :**

Man of science, explain it if you can, I'm off.

[*He goes.*]

**Nandini :**

Alas, alas ! I see amongst these shadows faces that I know. Surely that is our Anup and Upamanyu ?

Professor, they belong to our neighbouring village. Two brothers as tall as they were strong. They used to come and race their boats in our river on the fourteenth day of the moon in rainy June. Oh, who has brought them to this miserable plight ?

See, there goes Shaklu,—in sword play he used to win the prize garland before all the others. Anu-up! Shaklu-u! look this way, it's I, your Nandini, Nandin of Isháni, your very next village. They won't even raise their heads—heads lowered for ever!

Who is that? Surely, it is Kanku! Ah misery me! Even a boy like him has been chewed dry and thrown away a piece of sugar cane. He was a very shy lad. He would sit by the sloping side of the river landing where I used to go and fetch water, pretending he had come to gather reeds for making arrows. How often have I mischievously teased him. Kanku, look back at me! Alas, he whose blood would dance in his veins at a mere sign from me, now leaves my call unanswered.

Gone, gone, all the lights of our village are gone out! Professor, the steel is all eaten away, only the dark rust remains,—however did this happen?

**Professor :**

Nandini, your notice happens to be attracted towards the ashes, but turn your eyes towards the flame, and you will behold the brilliance of its writhing tongues.

**Nandini :**

I don't follow you at all.

**Professor :**

Well, you have seen the King, haven't you? I hear you were charmed by his appearance.

**Nandini :**

Of course I was! Isn't he marvellous in his strength?

**Professor :**

That marvellousness is the credit side of the account, and this ghastliness is the debit.

These small ones are consumed to ash, that the great ones may leap up in flame. This is the principle underlying all rise to greatness.

**Nandini :**

It's a fiendish principle !

**Professor :**

It's no use getting annoyed with a principle. Principles are neither good nor bad. That which happens *does* happen. To go against it, is to knock your head against the law of being.

**Nandini :**

If this is the way of man's being, I refuse to *be*, I want to depart with those shadows,—show me the way.

**Professor :**

When the time comes for showing us out, the great ones themselves will point the way. Before that, there's no such nuisance as a way at all ! You see how our Antiquarian has quietly slipped off, thinking he'll fly and save himself. After going a few steps, he'll soon discover that there's a wire network stretched from post to post, from country to country.

Nandini, I see, your temper is rising. The red oleanders against your flaming cheek are beginning to look like evening storm clouds gathering for a night of terror.

**Nandini :**

[*Knocking at the net window*]. Listen, listen !

**Professor :**

Whom are you calling ?

**Nandini :**

That King of yours, shrouded in his mist of netting.

**Professor :**

The door of the inner room has been closed. He won't hear you.

**Nandini :**

(*Calling out*) Bishu, mad brother mine !

**Professor :**

What d'you want with *him* ?

**Nandini :**

Why hasn't he come back yet ? I feel afraid.

**Professor :**

He was with you only a little while ago.

**Nandini :**

The Governor said he was wanted to identify Rañjan. I tried to go with him, but they wouldn't let me. Whose groaning is that ?

**Professor :**

It must be that wrestler of ours.

**Nandini :**

What wrestler ?

**Professor :**

The world-famous Gajju, whose brother, Bhajan, had the bravado to challenge the King to a wrestling match, since when not even a thread of his loin cloth is anywhere to be seen. That put Gajju on his mettle, and he came on with great sound and fury. I told him at the outset that, if he wanted to dig in the tunnels underneath this kingdom, he was welcome,—he could at least drag on a dead and alive existence for sometime. But if he wanted to make a show of heroics, that would not be tolerated for a moment.

**Nandini :**

Does it at all make for their well-being thus to keep watch and ward over these man-traps night and day ?

**Professor :**

Well being ! There's no question of "well" in it at all,—only "being." That *being* of theirs

has expanded so terribly that, unless millions of men are pressed into service, who's going to support its weight? So the net is spreading farther and farther. They must exist you see.

**Nandini :**

Must they? If it is necessary to die in order to live like men, what harm in dying?

**Professor :**

Again that anger, the wild cry of red oleander? It is sweet, no doubt, yet what is true is true. If it gives you pleasure to say that one must die to live, well, say so by all means; but those who say that others must die that they themselves may live,—it's only they who are actually alive. You may cry out that this shows a lack of humanity, but you forget, in your indignation, that this is what humanity itself happens to be. The tiger does not feed on the tiger, it's only man who fattens on his fellow man.

[*The Wrestler totters in.*]

**Nandini :**

Oh poor thing, see how he comes, staggering. Wrestler, lie down here. Professor, do see where he's hurt.

**Professor :**

You won't see any outward sign of a wound.

**Wrestler :**

All merciful God, grant me strength once more in my life, if only for one little day!

**Professor :**

Why, my dear fellow?

**Wrestler :**

Just to wring that Governor's neck!

**Professor :**

What has the Governor done to you ?

**Wrestler :**

It's he who brought about the whole thing. I never wanted to fight. Now, after egging me on, he goes about saying it's my fault.

**Professor :**

Why, what interest had he in your fighting ?

**Wrestler :**

They only feel safe when they rob the whole world of strength. Lord of Mercy, grant that I may be able to gouge his eyes out some day, to tear asunder his lying tongue !

**Nandini :**

How do you feel now, Wrestler ?

**Wrestler :**

Altogether hollowed out ! These demons know the magic art of sucking away not only strength but hope.

If only once I could somehow,—O good God, but once,—everything is possible to thy mercy,—if only I could fasten my teeth for once in the Governor's throat !

**Nandini :**

Professor, help me to raise him.

**Professor :**

That would be a crime, Nandini, according to the custom of this land.

**Nandini :**

Wouldn't it be a crime to let the man perish ?

**Professor :**

That which there is none to punish may be a sin, but never a crime. Nandini, come away, come right away out of this. The tree spreads its

root-fingers and does its grabbing underground, but there it does not bring forth its flowers. Flowers bloom on the branches which reach towards the light. My sweet Red Oleander, don't try to probe our secrets in the depths of their dust. Be for us swaying in the air above, that we may gaze upwards to see you.

There comes the Governor. He hates to see me talk to you. So I must go.

**Nandini :**

Why is he so dead against me?

**Professor :**

I can guess. You have touched his heart-strings. The longer it takes to tune them up, the more awful the discord meanwhile.

[*The Professor goes, the Governor comes in.*]

**Nandini :**

Sir Governor!

**Governor :**

Nandini, when our Gosain saw that *kunda* garland of yours in my room, both his eyes,—but here he comes——

[*The Gosain comes in.*]

Your Holiness, accept my reverence. That garland was given to me by our Nandini here.

**Gosain :**

Ah indeed! the gift of a pure heart! God's own white *kunda* flowers! Their beauty remains unsullied even in the hands of a man of the world. This is what gives one faith in the power of virtue, and hope for the sinners' redemption.



**Nandini :**

Please do something for this man, Your Reverence.  
There's very little life left in him.

**Gosain :**

The Governor is sure to keep him as much alive as it is necessary for him to be. But, my child, these discussions ill become your lips.

**Nandini :**

So in this kingdom you follow some calculation in apportioning life?

**Gosain :**

Of course,—for mortal life has its limits. Our class of people have their great burden to bear, therefore we have to claim a larger portion of life's sustenance for our share. That's according to Almighty God's own decree.

**Nandini :**

Reverend Sir, may I know what good God has so heavily charged you to do to these people?

**Gosain :**

The life that is unlimited gives no provocation to fight for its distribution. We Preachers have the charge of turning these people towards this unlimited life. So long as they remain content with that, we are their friends.

**Nandini :**

Then will this man with his very limited life have to remain lying here half dead?

**Gosain :**

Why should he remain lying down anyway? What say you, Governor?

**Governor :**

Quite right. Why should we let him lie? From now he won't need to walk by his own strength alone, we shall carry him along with ours.  
Here, Gajju!

**Wrestler :**

Yes, Sir Governor !

**Gosain :**

Good Lord, his voice has already become ever so much reedier. It strikes me we shall be able to make him join our choir of the Holy Name

**Governor :**

Gajju !

**Wrestler :**

At your service, Sir !

**Governor :**

Report yourself at the Headman's quarters, parish Y-Z.

**Nandini :**

How can the poor man possibly walk ?

**Governor :**

Look here, Nandini, it is our business to drive men. With the right kind of push a man can be made to go a good distance, even when he is at the point of collapse.

Get along with you, Gajju !

**Wrestler :**

As you command, Sir !

**Nandini :**

Let me come over to the Headman's quarters to help you.

**Wrestler :**

No. Don't add to my troubles, I beg of you.

[*The Wrestler goes*].

**Nandini :**

Governor, stay, tell me, whither have you taken my Bishu ?

**Governor :**

Who am I that I should take him ? The wind carries off the clouds,—if you think that to be a crime, make enquiries as to who is behind the wind.

**Nandini :**

Dear me, what an awful place ! You are not men,  
and those you drive are not men, either,—you  
are winds and they are clouds !

Reverend Gosain, I am sure, *you* know where my  
Bishu is.

**Gosain :**

I know, for sure, that wherever he is, it's for the  
best.

**Nandini :**

For whose best ?

**Gosain :**

That you won't understand—

Oh, I say, leave off, let go of that, it's my rosary.—  
Hallo Governor, what wild girl is this you  
have——

**Governor :**

The girl has somehow managed to ensconce herself  
in a niche, safe from the laws of this land, and  
we can't lay hands on her. Our King  
himself——

**Gosain :**

Good heavens, now she'll tear off my wrap of the  
Holy Name too. What unspeakable outrage !

[*The Gosain flies*].

**Nandini :**

Governor, you *must* tell me where you have taken  
Bishu.

**Governor :**

They have summoned him to the court of judgment.  
That's all that there is to tell you. Let  
me go.

**Nandini :**

Because I am a woman, you are not afraid of me ?  
God sends his thunderbolt through his

messenger, the lightning spark—that bolt I have borne here with me; it will shatter the golden spire of your mastery

**Governor :**

Then let me tell you the truth before I go. It's you who have dragged Bishu into danger.

**Nandini :**

I?

**Governor :**

Yes, you! He was so long content to be quietly burrowing away under-ground like a worm. It's you who taught him to spread the wings of death. O fire of the gods, you'll yet draw forth many more to their fate.—Then at length will you and I come to our understanding, and that won't be long.

**Nandini :**

So may it be. But tell me one thing before you go. Will you not let Rañjan come and see me?

**Governor :**

No, never.

**Nandini :**

Never, you say! I defy you to do your worst. This very day I am sure, absolutely sure, that he and I will meet!

[*Governor goes*].

(*Knocking and tugging at the net-work*). Listen, listen, King! Where's your court of judgment? Open its door to me.

[*Kishôr comes in*].

Who is that? My boy, Kishôr! Do you know where Bishu is?

**Kishôr :**

Yes, Nandini, be ready to see him. I don't know how it was, the Chief of the Guard took a

fancy to my youthfulness and yielded to my entreaties. He has consented to take him along by this path.

**Nandini :**

Guard ! Take him along ? Is he then——

**Kishôr :**

Yes, here they come.

**Nandini :**

What ! Handcuffs on your wrists ? Friend of my heart, where are they taking you like that ?

*[Bishu comes in under arrest].*

**Bishu :**

It's nothing to be anxious about !—Guards, please wait a little, let me say a few words to her.—My wild girl, my heart's joy, at last I am free.

**Nandini :**

What do you mean, Singer of my heart ? I don't understand your words.

**Bishu :**

When I used to be afraid, and try to avoid danger at every step, I seemed to be at liberty ; but that liberty was the worst form of bondage.

**Nandini :**

What offence have you committed that they should take you away thus ?

**Bishu :**

I spoke out the truth to-day, at last.

**Nandini :**

What if you did.

**Bishu :**

No harm at all !

**Nandini :**

Then why did they bind you like this?

**Bishu :**

What harm in that either? These chains will bear witness to the truth of my freedom.

**Nandini :**

Don't they feel ashamed of themselves to lead you along the road chained like a beast? Aren't they men too?

**Bishu :**

They have a big beast inside then, that's why their heads are not lowered by the indignity of man, rather the inner brute's tail swells and wags with pride at man's downfall.

**Nandini :**

O dear heart! Have they been hurting you? What are these marks on your body?

**Bishu :**

They have whipped me, with the whips they use for their dogs. The string of that whip is made with the same thread which goes to the stringing of their Gosain's rosary. When they tell their beads they don't remember that; but probably their God is aware of it.

**Nandini :**

Let them bind me like that too, and take me away with you, my heart's Joy! Unless I share some of your punishment I shan't be able to touch food from to-day.

**Kishôr :**

I'm sure I can persuade them to take me in exchange for you. Let me take your place, Bishu.

**Bishu :**

Don't be silly!

**Kishôr :**

Punishment won't hurt me. I am young. I shall bear it with joy.

**Nandini :**

No, no, do not talk like that.

**Kishôr :**

Nandini, my absence has been noticed, their blood-hounds are after me. Allow me to escape the indignity awaiting me by taking shelter in a punishment I joyfully accept.

**Bishu :**

No, it won't do for you to be caught—not for a while yet. There's work for you, dear boy, and dangerous work too. Rañjan has come. You must find him out.

**Kishôr :**

Then I bid you farewell, Nandini. What is your message when I meet Rañjan?

**Nandini :**

This tassel of red oleanders (*hands it to him*).

[*Kishôr goes*].

**Bishu :**

May you both be united once again.

**Nandini :**

That union will give me no pleasure now. I shall never be able to forget that I sent you away empty-handed. And what has that poor boy, Kishôr, got from me?

**Bishu :**

All the treasure hidden in his heart has been revealed to him by the fire you have lighted in his life. Nandini, I remind you, it's for you to put that blue-throat's feather on Rañjan's crest.—There, do you hear them singing the harvest song?

**Nandini :**

I do, and it wrings my heart, to tears.

**Bishu :**

The play of the fields is ended now, and the field-master is taking the ripe corn home. Come on, Guards, let's not linger any more.

(*Sings*)

Mow the corn of the last harvest,  
bind it in sheaves.  
The remainder, let it return  
as dust unto the dust.

[*They go*]

[*The Governor and a Doctor come in.*]

**Doctor :**

I've seen him. I find the King dissatisfied with himself. That's a disease, not of the body, but of the mind.

**Governor :**

What's the remedy?

**Doctor :**

A big shock. Try and get up a big row, either with some other king, or amongst the people themselves !

**Governor :**

In other words, unless he is allowed to harm some one else, he will harm himself ?

**Doctor :**

These big men are big babies. They must have plenty of play. When they get tired of one game, if you don't supply them with another, they'll break their toys. But be prepared, Governor, there isn't much time to lose.



**Governor :**

I've read the signs long ago, and completed all arrangements. But what a pity! Just when our golden city has amassed wealth such as it never had before, to have to—never mind, you may go—I'll think it over.

[*Doctor goes.*]

[*A Headman comes in.*]

**Headman :**

Did Your Lordship send for me? I am the Headman of Parish J.

**Governor :**

You are No. 321, aren't you?

**Headman :**

Marvellous! Your Lordship remembers even my unworthy self!

**Governor :**

My wife will be driving out to-day. The post will be changed near your village, and you must see that she's not detained.

**Headman :**

There's a plague on the cattle of our parish, and not a single ox can be had to draw the car. Never mind, we can press the diggers into service.

**Governor :**

You know where you have to take her? To the garden-house, where the feast of the Flag-worship is to be held.

**Headman :**

I'll see to it at once, but let me tell you one thing before I go. That 69 Ng, whom they call mad Bishu,—it's high time to cure his madness.

**Governor :**

Why, how does he annoy you?

**Headman :**

Not so much by what he says or does, as by what he implies.

**Governor :**

There's no need to worry about him any further. You understand !

**Headman :**

Really ! That's good news, indeed ! Another thing. That 47 V, he's rather too friendly with 69 Ng.

**Governor :**

I have observed that.

**Headman :**

Your Lordship's observation is ever keen. Only, as you have to keep an eye on so many things, one or two may perchance escape your notice. For instance, there's our No. 95, a distant connection of mine by marriage, ever ready to make sandals for the feet of Your Lordship's sweeper out of his own ribs,—so irrepressibly loyal is he that even his wife hangs her head for very shame,—and yet up to now——

**Governor :**

His name has been entered in the High Register.

**Headman :**

Ah, then his lifelong service will at last receive its reward ! The news must be broken to him gently, because he gets epileptic fits, and supposing suddenly——

**Governor :**

All right, we'll see to that. Now be off, there's no time.

**Headman :**

Just a word about another person,—though he's my own brother-in-law. When his mother died, my wife brought him up with her own hands ; yet for my master's sake——

**Governor :**

You can tell me about him another time. Run away now.

**Headman :**

There comes His Honor the Deputy Governor. Please speak a word to him on my behalf. He doesn't look upon me with favour. I suspect that when 69 Ng, used to enjoy the favour of free entry into the palace, he must have been saying things against me.

**Governor :**

I assure you, he never even mentioned your name.

**Headman :**

That's just his cleverness! What can be more damaging than to suppress the name of a man, whose name is his best asset? These schemers have their different ways. No. 33 of our Parish has an incurable habit of haunting Your Lordship's private chamber. One is always afraid of his inventing goodness knows what calumnies about other people. And yet if one knew the truth about his own———

**Governor :**

There's positively no time to-day. Get away with you, quick!

**Headman :**

I make my salute.

*(Coming back).* Just one word more lest I forget.

No. 88 of our neighbouring Parish started work on a miserable pittance, and before two years are out his income has run into thousands, not to speak of extras! Your Lordship's mind is like that of the gods—a few words of hypocritical praise are enough to draw down the best of your boons.

**Governor :**

All right, all right,—that can keep for to-morrow.

**Headman :**

I'm not so mean as to suggest taking away the bread from his mouth. But Your Lordship should seriously consider whether it's wise to keep him on at the Treasury. Our Vishnu Dutt knows him inside out. If you send——

**Governor :**

I shall send for him this very day. But begone,—not another word !

**Headman :**

Your Lordship, my third son is getting to be quite a big boy. He came the other day to prostrate himself at your feet. After two days of dancing attendance outside, he had to go away without gaining admission to you. He feels it very bitterly. My daughter-in-law has made with her own hands an offering of sweet pumpkin for Your Lordship———

**Governor :**

Oh confound you ! Tell him to come day after to-morrow, he will be admitted. *Now, will you———*

*[Headman goes. The Deputy Governor comes in.]*

**Deputy Governor :**

I've just sent on the dancing girls and musicians to the garden.

**Governor :**

And that little matter about Rañjan,—how far—?

**Deputy Governor :**

That kind of work is not in my line. The Assistant Governor has taken it upon himself to do the job. By this time his———

**Governor :**

Does the King——— ?

**Deputy Governor :**

The King can't possibly have understood. Some lie told by our men has goaded Rañjan to frenzy, and he's rushing to the usual fate of ———I detest the whole business. Moreover, I don't think it right to deceive the King like this.

**Governor :**

That responsibility is mine. Now then, that girl must be———

**Deputy Governor :**

Don't talk of all that to me. The Headman who has been put on duty is the right man,—he doesn't stick at any dirtiness whatever.

**Governor :**

Does that man Gosain know about this affair ?

**Deputy Governor :**

I'm sure he can guess, but he's careful not to know for certain.

**Governor :**

What's his object ?

**Deputy Governor :**

For fear of there being no way left open for saying :  
"I don't believe it."

**Governor :**

But what makes him take all this trouble ?

**Deputy Governor :**

Don't you see ? The poor man is really two in one, clumsily joined,—Priest on the skin, Governor at the marrow. He has to take precious care to prevent the Governor part of him coming up to the surface, lest it should clash too much with his telling of beads.

**Governor :**

He might have dropped the beads altogether.

**Deputy Governor :**

No, for whatever his blood may be, his mind, in a sense, is really pious. If only he can tell his beads in his temple, and revel in slave-driving in his dreams, he feels happy. But for him, the true complexion of our God would appear too black. In fact, Gosain is placed here only to help our God to feel comfortable.

**Governor :**

My friend, I see the instinct of the Ruler doesn't seem to match with the colour of your own blood, either !

**Deputy Governor :**

There's hope still. Human blood is fast drying up. But I can't stomach your No. 321 yet. When I'm obliged to embrace him in public, no holy water seems able to wash out the impurity of his touch.

Here comes Nandini.

**Governor :**

Come away, I don't trust you. I know the spell of Nandini has fallen on your eyes.

**Deputy Governor :**

I know that as well as you do. But you don't seem to know that a tinge of her oleanders has got mixed with the colour of duty in *your* eyes too—that's what makes them so frightfully red.

**Governor :**

That may be. Fortunately for us, our mind knows not its own secret. Come away.

[*They go.*]

[*Nandini comes in.*]

**Nandini :**

(*Knocking and pushing at the network*) Listen,  
listen, listen !

[*The Gosain comes in.*]

**Gosain :**

Whom are you prodding like that ?

**Nandini :**

That boa-constrictor of yours, who remains in  
hiding and swallows men.

**Gosain :**

Lord, lord ! When Providence wishes to destroy  
the small, it does so by putting big words into  
their little mouths.

See here, Nandini, believe me when I tell you that I  
aim at your welfare.

**Nandini :**

Try some more real method of doing me good.

**Gosain :**

Come to my sanctuary, let me chant you the Holy  
Name for a while.

**Nandini :**

What have I to do with the name ?

**Gosain :**

You will gain peace of mind.

**Nandini :**

Shame, shame on me if I do ! I shall sit and wait  
here at the door.

**Gosain :**

You have more faith in men than in God ?

**Nandini :**

Your God of the Flagstaff,—he will never unbend.  
But the man who is lost to sight behind the  
netting, will he also remain bound in his net-

work for ever? Go, go. It's your trade to delude men with words, after filching away their lives.

[*The Gosain goes.*]

[*Enter Phágulal and Chandrá.*]

**Phágulal :**

Our Bishu came away with you, where is he now?  
Tell us the truth.

**Nandini :**

He has been made prisoner and taken away.

**Chandrá :**

You witch, you must have given information against him. You are their spy.

**Nandini :**

You don't really believe that !

**Chandrá :**

What else are you doing here ?

**Phágulal :**

Every person suspects every other person in this cursed place. Yet I have always trusted you, Nandini. In my heart I used to———however, let that pass. But to-day it looks very very strange, I must say.

**Nandini :**

Perhaps it does. It may really be even as you say. Bishu has got into trouble for coming with me. He used to be quite safe in your company, he said so himself.

**Chandrá :**

Then why did you decoy him away, you evil-omened creature ?

**Nandini :**

Because he said he wanted to be free.

**Chandrá :**

A precious kind of freedom you have given him !



**Nandini :**

I could not understand all that he said, Chandrá.  
Why did he tell me that freedom could only be found by plunging down to the bottom of danger?—Phágulal, how could I save him who wanted to be free from the tyranny of safety?

**Chandrá :**

We don't understand all this. If you can't bring him back, you'll have to pay for it. I'm not to be taken in by that coquettish prettiness of yours.

**Phágulal :**

What's the use of idle bickering? Let's gather a big crowd from the workmen's lines, and then go and smash the prison gate.

**Nandini :**

I'll come with you.

**Phágulal :**

What for?

**Nandini :**

To join in the breaking.

**Chandrá :**

As if you haven't done quite enough breaking already, you sorceress!

[*Gôkul comes in.*]

**Gôkul :**

That witch must be burnt alive, before everything else.

**Chandrá :**

That won't be punishment enough. First knock off that beauty of hers, with which she goes about ruining people. Weed it out of her face as the grass is weeded with a hoe.

**Gôkul :**

That I can do. Let this hammer just have a dance on her nose tip———

**Phágulal :**

Beware ! If you dare touch her————

**Nandini :**

Stop, Phágulal. He's a coward ; he wants to strike me because he's afraid of me. I don't fear his blows one bit.

**Gôkul :**

Phágulal, you haven't come to your senses yet. You think the Governor alone is your enemy. Well, I admire a straightforward enemy. But that sweet-mouthed beauty of yours————

**Nandini :**

Ah, so you too admire the Governor, as the mud beneath his feet admires the soles of his shoes !

**Phágulal :**

Gôkul, the time has at length come to show your prowess, but not by fighting a girl. Come along with me. I'll show you what to fight.

[ *Phágulal Chandrá and Gôkul go.* ]

[ *A band of men come in.* ]

**Nandini :**

Where are you going, my good men ?

**First man :**

We carry the offering for the Flag-worship.

**Nandini :**

Have you seen Rañjan ?

**Second man :**

I saw him once, five days ago, but not since. Ask those others who follow us.

**Nandini :**

Who are they ?

**Third man :**

They are bearing wine for the Governors' feast.

[*The first batch goes, another comes in.*]

**Nandini :**

Look here, red-caps, have you seen Rañjan?

**First man :**

I saw him the other day at the house of Headman Sambhu.

**Nandini :**

Where is he now?

**Second man :**

D'you see those men taking the ladies' dresses for the feast? Ask them. They hear a lot of things that don't reach our ears.

[*Second batch go, a third come in.*]

**Nandini :**

Do *you* know, my men, where they have kept Rañjan?

**First man :**

Hush, hush!

**Nandini :**

I am sure you know. You *must* tell me.

**Second man :**

What enters by our ears doesn't come out by our mouths, that's why we are still alive. Ask one of the men who are carrying the weapons.

[*They go, others come in.*]

**Nandini :**

Oh do stop a moment and listen to me. Tell me, where is Rañjan?

**First man :**

The auspicious hour draws near. It's time for the King himself to come for the Flag-worship. Ask him about it when he steps out. We only know the beginning, not the end.

[*They go.*]

**Nandini :**

(*Shaking the network violently*). Open the door.  
The time has come.

**Voice** (*behind the scenes*) :

But not for you. Go away from here.

**Nandini :**

You must hear *now* what I have to say. It cannot wait for another time.

**Voice :**

You want Rañjan I know. I have asked the Governor to fetch him at once. But don't remain standing at the door when I come out for the worship, for then you'll run great risk.

**Nandini :**

I have cast away all fear. You can't drive me away. Happen what may, I'm not going to move till your door is opened.

**Voice :**

To-day's for the Flag-worship. Don't distract my mind. Get away from my door.

**Nandini :**

The gods have all eternity for their worship, they're not pressed for time. But the sorrows of men cannot wait to reach other men, they have so very little time.

**Voice :**

I am tired, very tired. I go to the Flag-worship to revive my drooping spirit. Don't unnerve me.

**Nandini :**

Pass over my body if you will, I shan't move.

**Voice :**

Nandini, too much have I indulged you, so that you no longer fear me. But to-day you *shall* be afraid !

**Nandini :**

I dare you to frighten me, as you do the rest. I scorn your indulgence !

**Voice :**

Do you indeed ! Then I shall shatter your pride to-day. The time has come for me to reveal myself to you.

**Nandini :**

I await that revelation. Open your door.

[*The door opens, the King appears*].

Oh who is that,—lying on the floor,—is it not Rañjan himself ?

**King :**

What did you say ? Rañjan ! How can that possibly be ?

**Nandini :**

Yes, this is indeed my Rañjan.

**King :**

Then why did he not give his name ? Why did he fling me his challenge ?

**Nandini :**

Wake, Rañjan, it is I, your Red Oleander ! King, why does he not wake ?

**King :**

Deceived ! These traitors have deceived me,—perdition take them ! My own machine refuses my sway ! Call the Governor—bring him to me handcuffed——

**Nandini :**

King, they all say you know magic. Make him wake up for my sake.

**King :**

My magic can only put an end to waking.—Alas ! I know not how to awaken.

**Nandini :**

Then hull me to sleep,—the same sleep ! Oh, why  
did you work this havoc ? I cannot bear it  
any more.

**King :**

I have killed youth. Yes, I have indeed killed  
youth,—all these years, with all my strength  
The curse of youth, dead, is upon me.

**Nandini :**

Did he not take my name ?

**King :**

He did,—in such a way that every vein in my body  
was set on fire.

**Nandini :**

(*To Rañjan*). My love, my brave one, here do I  
place this blue-throat's feather in your crest.  
Your victory has begun from to-day, and I am  
its bearer. Ah, here is that tassel of my  
flowers in his hand. Then Kishôr must have  
met him——

But where is he ? King, where is that boy ?

**King :**

Which boy ?

**Nandini :**

The boy who brought these flowers to Rañjan.

**King :**

That absurd little child ! He came to defy me with  
his girlish face.

**Nandini :**

And then ? Tell me ! Quick !

**King :**

He burst himself against me, like a bubble.

**Nandini :**

King, the Time is indeed now come !

**King:**

Time for what?

**Nandini:**

For the last fight between you and me.

**King:**

But I can kill you in no time,—this instant.

**Nandini:**

From that very instant that death of mine will go on killing you every single moment.

**King:**

Be brave, Nandini, trust me. Make me your comrade to-day.

**Nandini:**

What would you have me do?

**King:**

To fight against me, but with your hand in mine. That fight has already begun. There is my flag. First I break the flagstaff,—thus! Next it's for your to tear its banner. Let your hand unite with mine to kill me, utterly kill me. That will be my emancipation.

**Guards (*Rushing up*):**

What are you doing King? You dare break the Flagstaff, the holiest symbol of our divinity? The Flagstaff which has its one point piercing the heart of the earth and the other that of heaven! What a terrible sin,—on the very day of the Flag-worship! Comrades, let us go and inform our Governors.

[*They run off*].

**King:**

A great deal of breaking remains to be done. You will come with me, Nandini?

**Nandini:**

I will.

[*Phágulal comes in*].

**Phágulal :**

They won't hear of letting Bishu off. I am afraid, they'll—Who is this? The King!

Oh you wicked witch,—conspiring with the King himself! O vile deceiver!

**King :**

What is the matter with you? What is that crowd out for?

**Phágulal :**

To break the prison gate. We may lose our lives, but we shan't fall back.

**King :**

Why should you fall back? I too am out for breaking. Behold the first sign—my broken flagstaff!

**Phágulal :**

What! This is altogether beyond us, simple folk. Be merciful, Nandini, don't deceive me. Am I to believe my eyes?

**Nandini :**

Brother, you have set out to win death. You have left no chance for deception to touch you.

**Phágulal :**

You too come along with us, our own Nandini!

**Nandini :**

That is what I'm still alive for Phágulal. I wanted to bring my Rañjan amongst you. Look there, he has come, my hero, braving death!

**Phágulal :**

Oh, horror! Is that Rañjan lying there, silent?

**Nandini :**

Not silent. He leaves behind him in death his conquering call. He will live again, he cannot die.



**Phágulal :**

Ah, my Nandini, my beautiful one, was it for this you were waiting all these eager days?

**Nandini :**

I *did* await his coming, and he *did* come. I still wait to prepare for his coming again, and he *shall* come again. Where is Chandrá?

**Phágulal :**

She has gone with her tears and prayers to the Governor, accompanied by Gôkul. I'm afraid Gôkul is seeking to take up service with the Governor. He will betray us.

King, are you sure you don't mistake us? We are out to break your own prison, I tell you!

**King :**

Yes, it is my *own* prison. You and I must work together, for you cannot break it alone.

**Phágulal :**

As soon as the Governor hears of it, he will march with all his forces to prevent us.

**King :**

Yes, my fight is against them.

**Phágulal :**

But the soldiers will not obey you.

**King :**

You will be on my side!

**Phágulal :**

Shall we be able to win through?

**King :**

We shall at least be able to die! At last I have found the meaning of death. I am saved!

**Phágulal :**

King, do you hear the tumult?

**King :**

There comes the Governor with his troops. How could he be so quick about it ? He must have been prepared beforehand. They have used my own power against me.

**Phágulal :**

My men have not yet turned up.

**King :**

They will never come. The Governor is sure to get round them.

**Nandini :**

I had my last hope that they would bring my Bishu to me. Will that never be ?

**King :**

No hope of that, I'm afraid.

**Phágulal :**

Then come along, Nandini, let us take you to a safe place first. The Governor will see red, if he but catches sight of you.

**Nandini :**

You want to banish me into the solitary exile of safety ?

(*Calling out*) Governor ! Governor !—He has swung up my garland of *kunda* flowers on his spear-head. I will dye that garland the colour of my oleanders with my heart's blood.—Governor ! He has seen me ! Victory to Rañjan !

[*Runs off.*]

**King :**

(*Calling after her*) Nandini !

[*Follows her.*]

[*The Professor comes in.*]

**Phágulal :**

Where are *you* hurrying to, Professor ?

**Professor :**

Someone said that the King has at last had tidings of the secret of Life, and has gone off in quest of it. I have thrown away my books to follow him.

**Phágulal :**

The King has just gone off to his death. He has heard Nandini's call.

**Professor :**

The network is torn to shreds! Where is Nandini?

**Phágulal :**

She has gone before them all. We can't reach her any more.

**Professor :**

It is only now that we shall reach her. She won't evade us any longer.

[*Professor rushes out, Bishu comes in.*]

**Bishu :**

Phágulal, where is Nandini?

**Phágulal :**

How did you get here?

**Bishu :**

Our workmen have broken into the prison. There they are,—running off to fight. I came to look for Nandini. Where is she?

**Phágulal :**

She has gone in advance of us all.

**Bishu :**

Where?

**Phágulal :**

To the last freedom.

Bishu, do you see who is lying there?

**Bishu :**

Rañjan!

**Phágulal :**

You see the red streak?

**Bishu :**

I understand,—their red marriage tie !

**Phágulal :**

They are united.

**Bishu :**

Now it is for me to take my last lonely journey.—  
Perhaps we may meet.—Perhaps she may  
want me to sing —My mad girl, O my mad  
girl !—

Come, brother, on to the fight !

**Phágulal :**

To the fight ! Victory to Nandini !

**Bishu :**

Victory to Nandini !

**Phágulal :**

Here is her wristlet of red oleanders. She has  
bared her arm to-day,—and left us.

**Bishu :**

Once I told her I would not take anything from her  
hand. I break my word and take this. Come  
along !

[*They go.*]

(*Song in the distance*).

Hark 'tis Autumn calling,—

Come, O come away !

The earth's mantle of dust is filled with ripe corn !

O the joy ! the joy !



[CURTAIN.]

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# VISVA-BHARATI



## MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION

### Objects.

"To study the Mind of Man in its realisation of different aspects of truth from diverse points of view."

"To bring into more intimate relation with one another, through patient study and research, the different cultures of the East on the basis of their underlying unity."

"To approach the West from the standpoint of such a unity of the life and thought of Asia."

"To seek to realise in a common fellowship of study the meeting of the East and the West, and thus ultimately to strengthen the fundamental conditions of world peace through the establishment of free communication of ideas between the two hemispheres."

"And with such ideals in view to provide at Santiniketan aforesaid a centre of Culture where research into and study of the religion, literature, history, science, and art of Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Islamic, Sikh, Christian, and other civilisations may be pursued along with the culture of the West, with that simplicity in externals which is necessary for true spiritual realisation, in amity, good fellowship and co-operation between the thinkers and scholars of both Eastern and Western countries, free from all antagonisms of race, nationality, creed or caste, and in the name of the One Supreme Being who is Shantam, Shivam, Advaitam."

### Membership.

"The membership of the Visva-bharati and of its Constituent Bodies shall be open to all persons irrespective of sex, nationality, race, creed, caste, or class and no test or condition shall be imposed as to religious belief or profession in admitting or appointing members, students, teachers, workers, or in any other connection whatsoever."

The Society is at present maintaining the following institutions: - Patha-Bhavan (School), Siksha-Bhavan (College), Vidya-Bhavan (Research Institute), Kala-Bhavan (School of Arts and Crafts) at Santiniketan, Institute of Rural Reconstruction at Surul and Visva-bharati Sammilani at Calcutta and Dacca. The Society manages its own press and publishing department.

The supreme control is vested in the Panchayat, the Sadasyas (members) in General Meeting assembled. The Governing Body is the Samiti, consisting of members elected by the Sadasyas and the representatives of the different departments.

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